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THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS.

FORTY VOLUMES.

VOL. XXXIX.

THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS.

WITH

PREFACES,

BIOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND CRITICAL.

BY

JAMES FERGUSON, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF THE "NEW BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY."

Second Edition.

IN FORTY VOLUMES.

XXXIX.

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WINTER EVENINGS:

OR,

LUCUBRATIONS

ON

LIFE AND LETTERS.

Evening XL.

On artful, prostituted, and excessive Praise.

THE prostitution of praise, for venal purposes, is a species of deception which deserves to be ranked among the frauds of the vilest depredator on property. It robs virtue of the best among its sublunary rewards, and bestows it on crafty villainy, on plausible ignorance, on hypocritical pretence, on every character, however idle, useless, and worthless, which is at the same time subtle enough to wear a mask to save appearances, and can join, with an air of gravity, in the interested collusion. I do not at present comprehend flattery under the prostitution of praise of which I am speaking; but merely that practice of extolling men beyond measure, to serve their interest, which is known by the cant name of PUFFING; a name good enough indeed for the thing signified: but a name which implies some-

thing as far beneath real praise, as Dr. Rock, of notorious memory, was inferior to that honour of human nature, Dr. Heberden.

When a parent dwells with rapture on the genius and improvements of a lubberly lad, and a lover expatiates with ecstasy on beauties in his mistress which she does not possess, few can be deceived; because the world is sagacious enough to discover, and good-natured enough to make allowances for, the blind partiality of immoderate affection.

But honest affection and blind and mistaken partiality have no concern in the prostitution of praise, which I at present contemplate. This originates in low cunning, and is compatible with sovereign contempt for the very object which it extols to the skies.

The artful puffer is a philosopher of the Chesterfieldian school. His great object is to make the world his 'bubble.' He is perfectly acquainted with the best methods of sporting the puff-selfish, and can throw in even censure itself in such an adroit manner, as to contribute ultimately to his praise. He has a thousand arts in conversation, acquired by studying the great founder of the sect, which tend to set off his paltry beads and French paste, and make them mistaken for real pearls, and diamonds of the first water. But I intend only to view him at present as the puffer of others, of his relations, friends, patrons, and of all others by whom some selfish purpose is to be accomplished, his interest advanced, his vanity tickled, or his pride, either personal or of family, indulged.

The puffer, we will suppose, has a cousin, or a brother, or a common acquaintance, who, stimulated by the hope of gain or preferment, has produced an abortive poem, or a rickety treatise in prose. The finest type and paper have been used;

plates inserted by the most eminent artists; copies sent free of carriage, and all bound and lettered in the manner of Baumgarten, to many great people, famous critics, eminent literati; yet all in vain. The ill-formed bantling cannot stand upon its legs. Puffing is as necessary, as the bellows of the Humane Society to resuscitate the expiring corpse. To work, therefore, the puffing professor goes, with all the zeal of an operator who expects to receive the silver medal.

"Have you seen," he asks in all companies to which he can gain access, "have you seen the excellent poem, or dissertation, which has such a run, and which some attribute to Mr. A. or Dr. B.?—My God, Sir, it is a fine performance. The language so elegant, the ideas so new; the—the—in short, buy it. It will be a standard-book. But I must not leave you under the mistake of its being the production of Mr. A. or Dr. B: it is, to let you into a great secret, it is the work of my cousin; as promising a young man, I suppose, as any in the three kingdoms. O my God, Sir, it is astonishing what parts he possesses. He wrote this excellent book off-hand—mere play to him. He is idle—the dog is idle—a fault of all great geniuses—but then he has no occasion for plodding. Depend upon it, he will make a great figure; and be soon at the head of his profession in rank, as he is in merit, and has been some time, notwithstanding his youth."

If a friend of his brings out a play, more soporific than the dullest sermon, he declares that the house overflowed, and that it was received with repeated bursts of applause; though the few that were there, were admitted by orders; and every one of them caught sore throats by the chill blasts that

blew through the empty rows of the pit, boxes, and gallery.

He goes to a charity sermon at a crowded chapel, where his nephew holds forth, in consequence of his suggesting that a young man should put himself forward in the world, or else he will be neglected and starve. The poor nephew has the misfortune to have an impediment in his speech, forces what little he can articulate through the nasal orifices, and is obliged to that great professor of theology, Dr. Trusler, for all his divinity. It is true, the congregation grumble, and very few shillings jingle in the churchwardens' plate at the door; but the puffing professor intends that his nephew shall stand for a neighbouring lectureship then vacant, and therefore he sallies forth, and informs all that he can take the liberty of speaking to in the parish, that he really was never better entertained in his whole life, than he was with the discourse of a mighty pretty young man, who preached a charity-sermon at Fashion-street chapel, this morning. There was in it all the perspicuity of Tillotson, and all the solidity of Clarke, united with the florid elegance of Seed, the pathos of Sterne, and the copious fluency of Blair. "O my God, Sir, he was great indeed. Nothing theatrical either in his manner. No, no; nothing but the plain, dignified simplicity, which is the best garb of religion. A most excellent preacher! It is not the lot of every one to wear a mitre; but it is more glorious to deserve it. A very flattering circumstance to myself it is, that I have the honour to call this most promising young divine my near relation."

He has another friend or relation a painter. "Have you been to the Exhibition?" "O yes."—"Then, I

hope you took due notice of the best picture in the room, Mr. Le Daub's portrait of that most excellent preacher, my nephew, the prebendary, that preached the famous sermon, that made so much noise, some years back, at Fashion-street chapel. Indeed you could not but be struck with it. The original is as fine a figure, I suppose, as ever existed, and the picture has done it justice indeed: ample justice; for it breathes, it speaks—my God, it is too much—art has outstripped nature. The resemblance is actually more like nature than the living original; all life, fire, and energy. Poor Sir Joshua! it was unlucky for you that Le Daub's picture was hung up so near your feeble attempts. Le Daub, I suppose, bids fair to be the greatest portrait painter this country ever beheld. But he has too much business. People of fashion will be painted by nobody else now."

His friends and kinsfolk in the professions of medicine and law are all extolled in similar strains of hyperbolical eulogy. And as he pronounces his panegyrics with an air of confidence apparently arising from superior judgement, he misleads great numbers, and has actually raised to some degree of eminence a tribe of poor creatures, who, without puffing, would long ago have sunk in penury and oblivion.

But his puffing exertions are most ardently and laboriously displayed in the field of politics. He is not without hope of raising himself to some valuable post, when the party whom he puffs shall come into power.

"Was you at the House last night?"—"No; I went to see the play that you recommended."—"Well, you were, no doubt, admirably entertained; but yet, I wish you had been in the House. O

my God, Sir, I suppose there never was such a display of brilliancy since the world issued out of chaos. My friend Mr. —— was great indeed—astonishingly great—great beyond expression, beyond conception. No eloquence but his own can do justice to his stupendous powers. I look upon it, we have the three greatest 'luminaries' now in the house, that the world ever saw, and all on one side; they have been called, indeed, through lack of better comparisons, the Demosthenes, the Cicero, and the Pericles of the age. But, my dear Sir, Demosthenes, Cicero, and Pericles, were not fit to hold a candle to Mr. ——, or Mr. ——, or my Lord ——. They were children and fools to them. I look upon it, eloquence in the hands of this glorious, triumvirate has reached the acmé of perfection. Upon my soul, nature and art are so combined in them, have wrought in them so finished a work, that they can go no further; they have exhausted all their powers, and must rest and sleep for ages, before they can give birth to productions resembling in the remotest degree these great 'luminaries.' They thunder, they lighten, they shake the whole nation like an earthquake, by their stupendous oratory. It was said of Plato, that if the gods were to converse with mortals, they would adopt his language. It might be more truly said of Mr. ——. O Chatham, Chatham, thou never hadst an idea of eloquence. If the 'luminaries' could but come into power, how would the nation flourish! Such powers—are equal to the government of the universe; fit to wield the real thunder and lightning above; fit to rule the privy council of heaven, or rather to depose and usurp its dominion. The earth is unworthy of such 'luminaries.' The generality want power of vision to bear their brilliancy. Therefore these men are not in

office :—but, like roses, 'blush unseen, and waste their fragrance in the desert air.'"

But as the puffer blows a prosperous gale on those whom he wishes to serve, however undeserving; so he breathes a foul pestilential blast on the fairest characters, and the richest desert, which are rising to fame and fortune without being likely to promote his interest, his vanity, his party, and his profession.

He studies the arts of detraction with as much attention as the arts of unmerited praise.

"Who is that scribbler whom you mention?" he cries, when he hears another praising a man of merit; "I really never heard his name before. Has he written any thing? Bless me, I make a point of seeing every thing of any repute; but I never was fortunate enough to meet with Mr. —— (I beg your pardon; I forget the person's name you mentioned)—Mr. ——'s Works. But I will inquire—I dare say I can get them in quires at the cheesemonger's."

"Such an one is a good preacher," says somebody. "I really cannot speak to that point. I, for my part, was very drowsy, and, egad! all the people in the pew where I sat, who were decidedly the most intelligent in the church, were asleep, except my friend Professor ——, who must be acknowledged to be a good judge, and he was stuffing his pudding sleeves into his mouth to prevent a fit of laughter."

"A charming picture that of Sir Joshua's."—"La! la! The Knight grows old—breaks apace—indeed I never saw any thing to admire in his fugacious colours."

Praise the physician who has saved your life, or the Judge who has done you justice, and he lifts up

his brows and exclaims: "Dr. H. is an old woman. Judge ——, another; Lord —— does not understand law—but may be a mighty good man for aught I know."

As to statesmen and senatorial orators, they are all fools and knaves, but those of the party by whom he hopes to be rewarded for puffing and 'paragraphing,' with something more solid than empty praise.

In dispensing both censure and applause, he has no regard to truth, and the conviction of his own mind; but has arrived at such depravity as to be able to invent and propagate fictitious stories to confirm his sentences of men and their conduct, whether favourable or unfavourable. It is from such men as he that *paragraphs in the public prints* appear blackening or brightening individuals, for interested or malicious purposes, without the least attention to delicacy, justice, or veracity. The evil has indeed been carried to such lengths as to have almost become its own remedy; for the suspicions of mankind are awakened by reiterated deception, and credulity and malice, from having been often and ridiculously duped, begin to learn distrust and candour.

But the misfortune is, that just and merited praise often loses all its effect by being confounded with the hyperbolical and false encomiums of the puffer; and that modesty and truth, unassuming, unpretending, and rather diffident from the delicacy attending them, are either left unnoticed, or robbed of all their honours by the bold and interested detractor. The cultivation of solid worth is thus discouraged; and a study of the mean arts of securing the rewards of virtue without possessing its intrinsic value, promoted. Private happiness is

thus diminished among those who deserve to enjoy it unmolested; and the public welfare injured by discouraging virtuous and laborious exertion. Puffers ought therefore to be exposed, to be avoided as nuisances to society, and viewed with as much suspicion as sharpers, swindlers, gamesters, and the whole fraternity of unprincipled adventurers.

Immoderate praise is, indeed, become very suspicious; and a man of sense is as much upon his guard against its effect on his mind, as against the advertisements of quack-doctors, and the 'particulars' of auctioneers. He argues, that there must be someting ugly that requires so much gilding to cover it; something rotten, or blemished, where the thing recommended cannot be obtruded on notice without a profusion of paint and varnish.

It is diverting to consider how highly every little excellence is praised in the present age, by those who are interested in forcing it into celebrity. As the orator of the hammer denominates a cit's country-box, a villa, and a mansion; a cistern, a reservoir; a horsepond, a canal; a ditch, a trout-stream; a grass-plot, ten feet by twelve, a paddock: so a little sprig of divinity is equalled, in the praises of the puffer, to a Tillotson; a young practitioner, that has hardly walked the hospital, to a Boerhaave; a pragmatical pleader, as soon as he has thrown a tie-wig over his toupee, to a Coke or a Littleton; a petty catgut-scraper, to an Apollo; a canvass-spoiler, to an Apelles; a rhymer, to a Pope; a builder of a messuage, two rooms on a floor, to a Wren. Every hill is brought low by him, and every valley exalted.

Such eulogies are lavished on mediocrity, or even demerit, as were never given, in their lifetime at least, to Lord Chancellor Bacon, to Sir Isaac New-

ton, to Shakespeare, to Milton, to Handel, to all whom fame has justly placed in the most honourable niches of her temple. It seems to be an adopted maxim in the present age, that if glory come not till after death, it comes too late. And the goddess Fame seems to attend to it judiciously; for, as she gives so much during the lives of her votaries, she withholds all memory of most of them immediately on their decease.

Upon the whole, it may be said with truth, that praise, from its prostitution, is in many cases become satire, and satire an honour; and that censure or neglect is now, in a variety of instances, creditable; for it proves that the man to whom it is shown, has left his merit to stand or fall, as it might be able of itself; and in the honesty of an upright and ingenuous spirit, has scorned to use sinister and collusive arts to repell the weapons of envy and malice.

Evening XLI.

On Endeavours to derive Importance by affected Haste and pretended Avocations.

Among the many modes of assuming consequence, adopted by men of little sense and great vanity, is that of being always in a hurry.

Sir Hurricane Bustleton having inherited a very good fortune, and being trained to no profession, has less business on his hands than most people. But his ambition is to be thought a man of business, and his great pride is in what he terms, not without many complaints, his multiplicity of avocations.

If you call upon him, the servant is sure to deny him the first time, and to tell you that he cannot possibly be spoken with, unless you come before ten o'clock in the morning. You go at the time appointed. The servant carries up your name, and you are desired to wait in the parlour till Sir Hurry can leave a gentleman who is now with him on particular business. You wait at least an hour, when Sir Hurry comes running down stairs, rushing into the room, and banging the door, as if he were pursued by a bailiff. His hat, cane, and both his gloves, are in one hand; while with two fingers of the other, he just touches your palm, and then draws his watch from his fob, and after applying it to his ear with seeming alarm, accosts you in the following manner, without giving you an opportunity to answer him one syllable, or to cause a moment's interruption:—

"Bless me, I did not think it was so late. I beg a thousand pardons; but I have a particular engage-

ment at eleven. I know you will excuse me. But pray how does Mrs. Patience do? and all the little ones? John—bring my great coat."

Then, having drawn out a little memorandum-book, he hums over, in an interrupted soliloquy—"Sir Richard, at twelve—Lord Robert, at one—His Grace, at two—Confound these engagements—O Mr. Patience, will you dine with me at seven to-day? I shall then be able to speak to you; I hope so at least—unless a letter of great consequence should arrive by the post. If it should, you will have the candour to excuse my absence. My Lady will do the honours."—Then looking at his watch again, and stammering "Good morning," he flies off like an arrow from a bow, and shuts the door with a vehemence, which makes all Bedford-square re-echo.

If you take the pains to follow him, you find him lounging half an hour at a print-seller's window, or at the show-glass of a buckle-shop, or cheapening a tooth-pick, or parading up and down Bond-street till he is tired, and then resting himself in a coffee-house; till he sallies forth to pay a few morning calls in the afternoon to people as idly busy as himself; and thus, with perhaps a gallop in Rotten-row, gets rid of the tedious hours which intervene between the hour of rising and the hour of dinner.

Mr. Patience, however, having had the honour of invitation to dine with Sir Hurry, and seeing very little likelihood of being able to speak at present, upon the real business which he came up from York about, attends punctually at seven. Sir Hurricane is not yet come home. But in about a quarter of an hour his arrival is announced with such a rap as realizes the fictitious story of Salmoneus's thunder. In he runs, puffing, blowing, and wiping his face; and with a thousand interruptions makes

his apologies, declaring, that he came away now before the business that detained him was brought to a conclusion. The dinner is now brought in, quite spoiled either by over-doing, or by being kept till it is cold. "It cannot be helped, my dear. Mr. Patience will, I am sure, excuse it, as he knows every thing must give way to business. Egad! I am glad I thought of it. Has Leasum been here? I must write a line to him before I sit down. Do, pray Mr. Patience, begin.—I will be with you in a moment." Away he goes to a corner of the room, employs three or four footmen to bring paper, pen, ink, letter-case, sealing-wax, and wax-taper; curses the pen, curses the ink, tears the paper, flings it into the fire, then returns to dinner, vowing and protesting that he will get rid of this multiplicity of avocations which thus breaks in upon his convivial pleasures. After swallowing a wing of a chicken, and two or three glasses of Madeira, he starts like one frightened in a dream, and striking his forehead with his palm, deplores the treachery of his memory; for, he recollects too late, that he was to have dined with the Committee to day. But it does not signify; if he gets there by nine o'clock, he shall be in time to do business, which is the main thing. At last, really weary with his own affected activity, he sits down and finishes his repast, but not without several momentary fits of absence, many nods, shrugs, and broken soliloquies, significant of the multitude and profundity of his cogitations.

Poor Patience diverts himself with the Baronet's absurdity; but eats his dinner, and enjoys the conversation of my Lady and the children, though he has not a hope of opening upon the business he came upon, as Sir Hurricane is to go out at nine, and he himself is obliged to set out in one of the

night stages for Yorkshire. He takes his leave, after having agreed with Sir Hurry to transact the negotiation by letter.

Sir Hurry receives a long epistle from him in a few days, and immediately sits down and writes the following answer, in a hand scarcely legible through extreme precipitation.

"Dear Sir,

"Yours is just come to hand. It requires, I see, much consideration. But I cannot command a moment's leisure. Hope to be able in a few months. Jaded to death. A dozen letters to write by this night's post; besides a multiplicity of avocations in the evening. Excuse haste and blots. My servant waits to fold this letter. Hope he will direct it right. Yours, &c. in haste,

"HURRICANE BUSTLETON."

The next day, being Sunday, he fixes upon for his journey to Tunbridge-wells, and thence to Brighton on the Sunday following. His own horses cannot run fast enough without injury. They are therefore sent down at leisure the day before; and four hacks are put to the coach, which is laden before, behind, at top, and at bottom. "Sirrahs," he exclaims to the post-boys, "drive as fast as possible, especially through all the towns: I cannot bear to creep, like a snail, through a nasty town. Drive, I say, as if the devil was in you; or I shall remember you, at the end of the stage, in a manner you will not like." At the same time, he holds up a yellow coin, which never fails to operate like a spur of the best construction. Away the horses fly, as if they had wings; but luckily, they have not; luckily, I say, for, if they had, they could not glo-

riously bespatter the coach from bottom to top with the mud of Kent-street, and the dirt of Lewisham and Bromley. The dogs bark; children and nurses squall; all the doors and windows are crowded with old maids and young maids; the hostlers at the inns admire, and holla to the three footmen who come galloping after, "Who is it? who is it?"—"Sir Hurricane, Sir Hurricane," they reply; and the whole town resounds the name of Sir Hurricane, the great Baronet, going to Tunbridge. Two or three horses fall victims; but the Baronet arrives, fortunately, in time to have his hair dressed before he dines *tête-à-tête* with his Lady, at a little lodging in a vamped cottage on Mount-Misery.

Sir Hurricane Bustleton is so rapid in his progress, that it would tire even Pegasus himself to keep pace with him. I shall therefore take leave of him at Mount-Misery, with reminding him that true dignity is never in a hurry; and assuring him, that the hurry of importance so much affected in travelling, and all the other motions, by those who have really nothing important to do, increases their insignificance in the eyes of men of sense, by showing how contemptible a shift they are driven to, merely to exhibit the external appearance of that consequence which they do not possess, and cannot acquire by riches and titles, unaccompanied with personal merit.

Evening XLII.

On a Latin Poem on the Art of Nursing.

Physicians have often written didactic poems on various subjects connected with the business of their faculty. Armstrong's poem on Health is one of the best I have seen; but the *Syphilis* of Fracastorius and the *Pædotrophia* of Sammarthanus are not without distinguished beauty.

Though Sammarthanus's *Pædotrophia*, or Art of Nursing, is in Latin; yet the poet descends to such minute precepts as really concern the nurses and gossips, who, unless they are as expert in the Latin as in the vulgar tongue, will not be the better for them.

The following passage, in which the poet recommends to mothers the suckling of their own infants, is exquisitely beautiful:

Ipsæ etiam Alpinis villosæ in cautibus ursæ,
Ipsæ etiam tigres, et quicquid ubique ferarum est,
Debita servandis concedunt ubera natis;
Tu, quam miti animo natura benigna creavit,
Exuperes feritate feras? nec te tua tangant
Pignora, nec querulos puerili e gutture planctus;
Nec lacrymas misereris, opemque injusta recuses,
Quam præstare tuum est, quæ te pendebit ab unâ?
Cujus onus teneris hærebit dulce lacertis
Infelix puer, et molli se pectore sternet?
Dulcia quis primi captabit gaudia risus,
Et primas voces, et blæsæ murmura linguæ?
Tune fruenda alii potes ista relinquere, demens,
Tantique esse putas teretis servare papillæ,
Integrum decus et juvenilem in pectore florem?

Tu, cui concedunt meliorem numina mentem,
Sume ultro quodcunque operæ, quodcunque laboris,
Ut serves opus ipsa tuum et pia munera præstes.

"The very bears on the Alpine rocks, the very tigers themselves, and the fiercest wild beasts on the face of the earth, give suck to their young ones. Will you then, whom nature has kindly formed with tender sympathy, exceed the brutes in cruelty? And will you not suffer the little pledges of your own loves to touch you, and will you not pity the moans and tears of the poor infants? And will you refuse your aid, which it is your duty to afford, and which depends upon you alone? In whose arms shall the sweet burden be laid; on whose soft bosom shall the poor child recline? Who first shall taste the delight of the first smiles, listen to the first syllables, and the babbling of its lisping tongue? Ah, foolish woman! will you let another enjoy all this pleasure? Is it worth while to lose so much for the sake of preserving beauty and delicacy of shape?

"I exhort you, who, by the blessing of heaven, have better principles, to take upon you whatever trouble and fatigue may attend this maternal duty, that you may preserve your own work, and perform the pious office of a good mother."

I must leave this passage to be dilated on by husbands who wish to inculcate the salutary doctrine which they contain. The verses gave me a high opinion of the taste and sensibility of their writer; and it would be a happy circumstance for 'babes and sucklings,' if they could be as persuasive as they are pleasing.

I will add another passage, excellent both for its advice and composition, on giving the child due exercise:

Nec minus inde agita, sublataque mollibus ulnis
Interdum exerce leni corpuscula motu,
Multa hilari simul ore jocans: neque clausa reconde
Usque domi in latebris, sed apertas defer in auras,

Dum nullæ sudo nebulæ, dum purior æther,
Et nitidum lenes ludunt per inane Favoni;
Ut cœlo et variâ gavisus imagine rerum
Assuescat luci puer, Authoremque potentem
Quà potis, admirans primis agnoscat ab annis.

"Exercise their little bodies with a gentle motion, talking to them at the same time cheerfully. Neither keep them within doors always, but carry them into the open air, while the sky is serene, while the air is clear, and the zephyrs play around; that the little one, rejoicing at the sight of heaven and the various objects around him, may be accustomed to the light of day, and, struck with admiration, learn even from his infancy to venerate, in some degree, the Almighty Maker."

Monsieur de St. Marthe, or Sammarthanus, as he is classically called, is a poet of the first class among the imitators of ancient elegance. He was born in 1536, and died in 1623.

Like the poets of his time, he has furnished a volume divided into *Lyrics*, *Elegies*, *Sylvæ*, *Epigrammata*, *et Cantica*, or Sacred Poems. The *Pædotrophia* is the best of his works; but he who has a taste for modern Latin poetry, will find much entertainment in every part of his volume.

Subjoined to the poems are three books of *Elogia* in prose, which contain many entertaining biographical anecdotes of French literati, in a classisal style, and a diction, that, though it may perhaps be thought too florid, is yet engaging, because it is animated.

Evening XLIII.

On the Necessity of Latin, to understand with Accuracy many English Words, especially in our old Writers.

I have often maintained the necessity of understanding Latin and Greek in order to understand English completely; and I have heard the doctrine controverted, and attributed to a pedantical desire of enhancing the value of the learned languages.

The authors of the last century afford many proofs of this necessity. I have accidentally noticed the following passages in the works of Bishop Taylor, and they appear to me to be decisive.

The Bishop says, in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, "The Arabian physicians endeavour to ELEVATE and lessen the miraculous conception."

A mere English reader will either not understand this at all, or understand it in such a manner as to render it contradictory and nonsensical. He will understand 'elevate' in its present signification, to raise or exalt: whereas the author means quite the contrary, 'to depress and to lower.' The Bishop had the Latin *elevare* in his mind, which signifies to diminish, detract from, or extenuate. In some editions the word is altered by somebody who did not understand it, and instead of "*elevate*" is printed "*alleviate**."

"In the same page he says, "St. John was listened to by king and people, by doctors and by IDIOTS, by Pharisees and Sadducees."

* Hooker, in his Ecclesiastical Politie, uses the same word in the same sense—"There are that *elevate* too much the ordinarie, &c. means." Book v. sect. 59.

A mere English reader will not fail to understand fools by idiots, and will conclude that the Bishop intended to say that St. John was attended to by wise men and fools. But as the Bishop means by the context to honour St. John, it is impossible to conceive that he would say, as a compliment to him, that he was listened to by 'idiots' in the synonymous sense with 'FOOLS.' The truth is, that the Bishop had the Greek IDIOTAI in view, and only meant that St. John was listened to by all ranks and conditions, by the learned and the unlearned; for IDIOTAI signifies the common people, the vulgar herd, as distinguished from the learned, or people of condition.

A great multitude of instances might be produced from the same learned author; but these happened to occur while I was reading his admirable little treatise inserted in the fourth chapter and first book of the *Ductor Dubitantium*, entitled An Instance of Moral Demonstration, or a Conjugation of Probabilities, proving that the Religion of Jesus Christ is from God. I advise my reader attentively to consider that excellent piece, not only as a most ingenious composition, but as exhibiting, in a striking point, many unanswerable arguments in favour of Christianity.

I beg leave to present him, as an inducement, with the following specimen, on the internal evidence of the divinity of Jesus Christ's religion:

"It is a doctrine perfective of human nature, that teaches us to love God, and to love one another, to hurt no man, and to do good to every man; it 'propines' to us the noblest, the highest, and the bravest pleasures of the world; the joys of charity, the rest of innocence, the peace of quiet spirits, the wealth of beneficence, and forbids us only to be beasts and to be devils; it allows all that God and nature intended, and only restrains the excrescencies of nature, and

forbids us to take pleasure in that which is the only entertainment of devils, in murders and revenges, malice, and spiteful words and actions; it permits corporal pleasures where they can best minister to health and societies, to conversation of families, and honour of communities; it teaches men to keep their words, that themselves may be secured in all their just interests; and to do good to others, that good may be done to them; it forbids biting one another, that we may not be devoured by one another; and commands obedience to superiors, that we may not be ruined in confusions; it combines governments, and confirms all good laws, and makes peace, and opposes and prevents wars where they are not just, and where they are not necessary. It is a religion that is life and spirit, not consisting in ceremonies and external amusements, but in the services of the heart, and the real fruit of lips and hands, that is, of good words and good deeds; it bids us to do that to God which is agreeable to his excellencies, that is, worship him with the best thing we have, and make all things else minister to it; it bids us to do that to our neighbour by which he may be better: it is the perfection of the natural law, and agreeable to our natural necessities, and promotes our natural ends and designs: it does not destroy reason, but instructs it in very many things, and complies with it in all: it hath in it both heat and light, and is not more effectual than it is beauteous: it promises every thing that we can desire, and yet promises nothing but what it does effect; it proclaims war against all vices, and generally does command every virtue: it teaches us with ease to mortify those affections which reason durst scarce reprove, because she hath not strength enough to conquer: and it does create in us those virtues which reason of herself never

knew, and, after they are known, could never approve sufficiently. It is a doctrine in which nothing is superfluous or burdensome, nor yet is there any thing wanting which can procure happiness to mankind, or by which God can be glorified: and, if wisdom, and mercy, and justice, and simplicity, and holiness, and purity, and meekness, and contentedness, and charity, be images of God and rays of divinity, then that doctrine in which all these shine so gloriously, and in which nothing else is ingredient, must needs be from God: and that all this is true in the doctrine of Jesus, needs no other probation but the reading of the words."

But to return to the subject on which this paper began: I venture to affirm that no man, however sensible and well informed in other respects, can understand completely the works of Taylor, Hooker, Milton, and many other most celebrated old English writers, without an accurate knowledge of Latin and Greek etymology. Yet, alas! how many are bitter enemies to Latin and Greek, to whom, I am pretty sure, those languages never did any harm!

Evening XLIV.

On the Prints in Prayer Books, Bibles, and other religious Books.

There can be no doubt but that they who added prints to religious books, intended to assist the reader in raising in his mind clear and striking ideas of sacred things; but the artists they employed have commonly been so injudicious as to render figures of a most serious and solemn kind objects of derision.

All graphical representations of God the Father are to be disapproved; for, instead of exalting our idea of the Deity, they *elevate* (to use a word in the sense animadverted on in the preceding Evening) or lower it. In thinking of God, imagination forms an obscure but grand image of a sublime existence, ΚΤΔΕΙΓΑΙΩΝ, and the heart adores it; but the hand of the artist at once diminishes its grandeur, and divests it of its glory. Think of the great God of heaven and earth drawn by a painter under the figure of a little decrepit old man with a long beard sitting in an elbow chair.

The Scripture introduces God speaking or appearing with terrific majesty. "*The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord: Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.*" It belongs to injudicious limners and sculptors to render this 'presence' familiar. Hayman has one or two designs for Newton's Milton, in which God is introduced; and in that which is prefixed to the sixth book, the Deity appears terrible, and the artist has shown great skill; but yet he

could never equal imagination, and therefore his best efforts appear defective. Obscurity aggrandises images of celestial beings; once delineate them on paper, and render the idea clear and determinate, and you put an end to the awe of the beholder.

I can easily understand, and readily admire, as a strong poetical figure, the touching of Isaiah's hallowed lips with fire; but I cannot admire the engraver's representation, in some Bibles, of an angel from heaven with a blacksmith's tongs burning the poor prophet's lips with a live coal.

Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic incredulus odi. Hor.

Such sights I hate and disbelieve.

There is a great analogy between poetry and painting; but yet poetry may represent many things with great vivacity and beauty which will not bear an exact delineation on paper or canvass, without a shocking *bathos*.

The representations of Satan, in many serious books, is so ridiculous, that one would almost imagine the artist intended to laugh at the idea of such a being. Who can bear some prints of demoniacs, where the possessed are exhibited vomiting up little black devils with cloven feet and long tails? If artists thought such figures likely to excite or preserve devotion, they must have been as weak as their admirers.

But as they have erred by familiarity, so also from ill-placed grandeur. The Nativity has ever been the favourite subject of painters. Truth required that they should exhibit a stable; but, in order to dignify so mean a place, they usually introduce a superb and fluted column of the Grecian architecture. The ox, the ass, and the manger, are faintly exhi-

bited; but the grand pillar strikes the spectator with ideas of sumptuous magnificence. The birth of our Saviour in this humiliating place was intended to recommend humility by the force of example: but the painter comes, and, by a strange metamorphorsis, converts the stable to a gorgeous palace. The artifice intended to raise veneration causes contempt, and the apparent falsehood is highly indecent when it obtrudes itself among the pages of a Holy Bible.

Few books have had a greater popularity than the works of Bishop Taylor. Several of them are adorned with good plates by Faithorne; but disgraced by others of a ridiculous kind. The frontispiece to the Rules of holy Dying cannot but excite mirth even in those who do not habitually sit in the seat of the scorner. On one side is the statue of a clergyman in his canonicals, with the inscription on the base, *Mercurius Christianus*. In the clouds, opposite to him, is the figure of an old man, with a flag in one hand and a crown in the other, in a sitting posture, intended to represent Jesus Christ. My reader will immediately see the absurdity of introducing *Mercurius* in the same picture with our Saviour. On the other side is represented, in a most childish manner, Hell and the devil. Here the figures are shockingly deformed; but they are calculated to strike terror into none but children, and those who labour under the weakest superstition. The book, in many parts, is excellent, and has been read by the devout with great edification. It is to be regretted that it was deformed by such a picture, which appears to be dictated by folly, which is ludicrous in the eyes of every sensible observer, and which might have been dispensed with;

——*possit duci quia sine istis.* Hor.

Because we can do without them.

The prints inserted in the Common Prayer Books are of a kind which none but the ignorant and vulgar can admire; and even they can receive no advantage from them. Such persons may be diverted by them from devotion, instead of being guided to it, or animated in it. The cut entitled Jesus tempted by the Devil, is almost as ludicrous as if it had come from Hogarth or Bunbury. The devil has a crown and sceptre, a modern coat, apparently a pair of boots, and from his rump hangs a tail resembling what is called a pig-tail.

Endeavours to represent the Trinity by a triangle with a dove in the centre, might be spared. The miraculous gift of tongues has been lowered in the reader's conception by the painter's art. In most sculptures angels are too much familiarised to be revered.

In Sparke's Feasts and Fasts there is an engraving to represent our Saviour's passion. He is drawn praying in the garden, and supposed to be saying—"Father, if thou wilt, take this cup from me, &c. And there appeared an angel from heaven comforting him." The cup is in this place evidently a figurative expression; but the artist represents an angel actually reaching out of the clouds a real cup, in the form of a common drinking glass or rummer, and handing it in the attitude of a tavern-waiter holding out a goblet of wine.

Nelson's Festivals is an excellent book, and a great favourite with all the devout. I am concerned that it should be disgraced by two paltry plates, as frontispieces, which lessen the reverence due to the whole subject. On the back ground of one are our

Saviour and Satan on the mountain. Satan is represented with a tail, as usual; and, if he had not wings, would present the idea of a cat standing upon her hinder legs. It is improbable that any Christian can be delighted or improved by such figures; but it is certain, that many may be offended by them, and lose that veneration for sacred things, which was favourable to their virtue and their peace.

By inspecting popular books of devotion, many other absurd prints might easily be pointed out; but I mean not to increase the ridicule. I wish all such disgraceful prints could be torn out and committed to the flames. What an idea must a Mahometan or a sensible Indian entertain of Christianity, when he sees such silly figures in books sanctioned by the most awful authority?

I know it will be said that such prints are intended only for weak brethren and sisters, for children, and old men and women in their dotage. Perhaps this is true; but others unavoidably see them, and they suggest a ridiculous idea on sacred subjects, not easily to be banished when once admitted. He who has so far divested himself of natural awe as to laugh at what is venerable, will not, without a greater effort than most men are willing to make, raise in his mind a due degree of respect, in the contemplation of heaven itself and its almighty King.

The greatest painters whom the world has yet seen, have shown that they were able to represent sacred subjects, not only without lowering them, but with great addition to their inherent sublimity. They chose grand subjects, and their genius expanded to grasp the magnitude. Such, and such only, may be imitated by the little artists who draw for common books of devotion; but I think it would be a good rule, never to represent either the God omnipotent,

or the Evil Spirit, embodied. Painters should not deviate into heathenism by confounding Jehovah with Jupiter, or Satan with Pluto. What mortal hand shall presume to paint Him in a mortal form and a material vestment, who is diffused over all space, and who clothes himself with light as with a garment?

Let the limner practise an excellent rule suggested by Horace for the poet:

Quæ desperat tractata nitescere posse relinquat.

The subject which he cannot adorn, let him prudently decline.

Evening XLV.

On the Safety and Happiness of a Life of Obscurity.

The Choice of Hercules, and other pieces of a similar tendency to be found among the ancient moralists, were a beautiful and efficacious mode of conveying a fine moral lesson. They powerfully stimulated the minds of young persons to neglect the blandishments of vice, and to follow virtue over the rugged steep that leads to glory. Hercules made an honourable choice; and his example was intended to fire the soul with emulative ardour.

Ambition like his is useful, as it calls for those fine exertions which contribute to meliorate the condition of man, to improve all that Providence has allotted him, to perfect art, and to adorn society. Happy it is for the public that man is so formed as, for the sake of fame, to relinquish ease, and devote his time, his health, and his life, to labours, which, while they dignify himself, enrich, embellish, and aggrandize an empire.

And great is the pleasure attendant on exertion, and sweet the reward of applauding fellow-creatures, when the exertion is virtuous and successful.

Magnum iter intendo; sed dat mihi gloria vires.

But there is a great deal of unsuccessful exertion in pursuit of fame, and many, after sowing in pain and labour, reap only a harvest of disappointment.

For the sake of these, and of others who find not opportunities to distinguish themselves, it is useful to suggest consolatory topics; such as point out the

pains and penalties of fame, and the ease and pleasure of a life led in retirement. Nor is it fair to attribute whatever is said on this side of the question, to the same motive which induced the fox to exclaim that the grapes were sour. There are certainly a thousand solid comforts to be enjoyed in a state of obscurity, which are bartered for the flattering distinction of popular applause.

He who is labouring to emerge from obscurity, and whose mottos are the spirited passages of Virgil,

——tentanda via est, quâ me quoque possim
Tollere humo, victorque virûm volitare per ora,—

——aliquid jamdudum invadere magnum
Mens agitat mihi: *nec placida contenta quiete est*,

VIRG.

immediately draws upon himself the watchful eyes of competition. His equals, over whom he attempts to rise, shoot at him from the ground the shafts of envy, and those who have already risen, assail him from the turret with the missile weapons of jealousy. The success and final result of his attempts are doubtful; but, in the mean time, the wounds and arrows of outrageous enemies are sensibly felt, and often inflict on his peace a wound that admits no cure.

When a man is once rendered conspicuous, once become the subject of conversation, not only those who envy his distinction, but those who, from want of sense or of knowledge, misunderstand his conduct or mistake his meaning, employ themselves, by secret influence or open enmity, to bring him down to their own level.

The greatest excellence is the most likely to be misunderstood; for few are qualified to be competent judges of singular pre-eminence. It is a just opinion, that they who would form a sound judge-

ment in learning, in arts, or in life, of an exalted degree of perfection, must themselves possess it, and be able, while they give the criticism, to furnish the example.

From the malice of envy, the mistakes of ignorance, the levity of thoughtlessness, it is impossible that he who is lifted up and become a mark, should not frequently be wounded with a poisoned arrow. If he has sensibility, his condition must be painful though it may be exalted. Like the traveller on a bleak hill, he must bide the pelting of the pitiless storm, and envy the shepherd in the vale his hovel and his cot.

It is a trite remark, that the smallest specks are most visible in the whitest raiment. The common infirmities of human nature, arising from bodily sickness or momentary ill-temper, are noticed in conspicuous characters, and exaggerated by malicious ingenuity. They are remembered long, and perhaps never forgiven. In a common man, who would have taken notice of such peccadilloes as are handed to posterity of Samuel Johnson? The little infirmities of the man, have given such offence as to prejudice many against the writer.

But the votary of fame will not be troubled with externals only. He has within him a restless spirit, which suffers not his eyelids to close, in the soft hours when unambitious mortals enjoy the sweetest slumber; and while others taste the delight of oblivious slumber,

——Νηδυμον ὑπνον——
Μαλακῳ δεδμημενοι ὑπνῳ——

of him it may be said, he must not spend the night in sleep,

——ου χρη παννυχιον ευδειν.

A state of such solicitude cannot but lose many

solid satisfactions, though it should be allowed, as is indeed true, that the alternate excitation of hope and fear is attended with considerable delight, in consequence of the exercise it affords to the animal spirits and to the imagination.

It were easy to add on this subject, an abundance of common-place remarks on ambition, glory, vanity, fame, ease, retirement; but this kind of common-place, which every one allows to be true and solid, every one neglects, because, like the sun, it is self-evident and familiar. I wish to draw my reflections from real observations on life;

Respicere exemplar vitæ et veras hinc ducere voces. Hor.

From real observation, then, I am able to pronounce, that persons who live in their families a regular and temperate life, performing their relative social and religious duties, appear to enjoy more tranquillity and self-possession, than the various tribes that are struggling to emerge from the level on which their birth and circumstances have placed them. Such as these, ever restless, taste not the pleasures of repose; and as the desires of ambition, like those of avarice, increase with possession, they are strangers, as long as they live, to contentment, the sweetest ingredient of life.

When it is considered, that besides the certainty of incurring slander and misrepresentation, of feeling much uneasiness, and of forgoing many most desirable comforts, the ambitious are also in danger of infamy where they expected fame, and contempt where they demanded honour, they will, it is to be hoped, repress their ardour, and learn to seek enjoyment in governing themselves and their families according to wisdom and justice. And let them not think that the public service is deserted by them;

for when every man, according to the Scripture rule, studies to be quiet, and to mind his own business, the public will be better served than by the officious interference of pragmatical activity.

Though the favour and applause of men may gratify vanity, and promote pecuniary interest, for a few years, yet of how little value will they appear at the close of life! Men know but little of each other's real character and merit, and frequently err by undervaluing and overvaluing them. They have often lavished fame and glory on the undeserving, and denied them, at least during life, to their greatest benefactors.

Milton had very little reputation as a poet while alive. And as to posthumous fame,

Si post fata venit gloria, sera venit.

Churchill had a thousand times more popularity while he lived than Milton. He owed his popularity to politics. These interested the factions of the times. Milton's age was indeed factious and turbulent enough; but he did not write political poetry. And the violent partizans of his time cared little for old Adam and Eve, and the blissful scenes of Eden's Garden.

Men are so apt to envy, to err, and to be ungrateful, that a wise man will take care, if possible, not to let the fabric of his happiness rest on a pillar so tottering as the people's favour. He will endeavour to do good and to act reasonably, and leave popularity to follow her own caprice, and not let it be said of him, that his health and happiness depend on applause or the want of it.

Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum. Hor.

It is the great business of Christians to rise above

the world, to do right actions, not as men-pleasers, but unto God and their own consciences; and happy they who quietly walk in their pilgrimage through this world through the vale of peace, neither pursuing fame, nor declining it when it comes as the temporal reward of goodness, but looking for approbation to Him who seeth the heart, and whose approbation is the only true glory.

But even here man must be on his guard against vain-glory; for many have appeared to be religious, and to despise glory, who were anxiously seeking it, deceiving themselves and others. "*Sæpe homo*," says St. Austin, "*de vanæ gloriæ contemptu, vanius gloriatur.*"

Evening XLVI.

On Prejudices against religious Books.

I hope my readers will not think that I deviate into an uninteresting subject, when in the course of the Winter Evenings I am sometimes led to consider that which is the business of every man, and far more important than the finest disquisitions in Science, Ethics, Arts, and the Belles Lettres:

——id, quod
Æquè pauperibus prodest, locupletibus æquè,
Æquè, neglectum, pueris, senibusque nocebit. Hor.

The solemn stillness of a solitary Winter Evening naturally leads to the contemplation of religion. Indeed, a subject in which all men are at all times deeply concerned, can never be unseasonable.

I am sorry to observe, that such subjects should be considered as dull. But I was surprised a little while ago, on mentioning my design to touch on religious topics, to hear from a sensible man, that he wished I would not, as I might depend upon it, my book would be more generally acceptable if religious topics were entirely excluded. "If you write a religious book," he said, "you must expect few readers but old women with their spectacles; you will stand no chance of getting rid of the copies, unless the Societies for promoting religious knowledge, and for the propagation of the Gospel, should think proper to give them away."

This prejudice against religious books, which I fear is too prevalent among those who call themselves men of pleasure, gaiety, and fashion, is very unfortunate, as it tends to cut off some of the best odpor-

tunities of deriving a knowledge of that, which, through ignorance alone, they rashly despise.

Indeed it must be acknowledged, that in the great abundance of religious books, for which this country is remarkable, there are many which rather injure the cause which they were written to advance. They were perhaps only written for a particular sect or persuasion; and when they fall into the hands of those who are not attached to any party, but judge from their own reason and unbiassed sentiments, they excite ideas unfavourable to religion in general. A poor style, wretched arguments, cant, hypocrisy, fanaticism, will give a disgust to the sober-minded; and much more to those who are little inclined to serious ideas, however well recommended by a polished style, and a dispassionate appeal to reason.

Yet such books may perhaps produce a good effect among those classes for whom they were intended, though they appear, to persons of education, replete with gross absurdity. They are not therefore to be utterly despised, though they may be neglected; and it is unfair and ill-judged to form an idea of all religion and all religious treatises from the zealous but poor attempts of an illiterate bigot. It is like forming a judgement of all poetry from the works of Blackmore. Though, be it always remembered, that the disciples were poor fishermen; that religion may be understood without critical erudition; and that many a good man without learning has comprehended the vital and essential parts of religion, 'the religion of the heart,' better than the most learned professor of theology in the most celebrated university. While the one was inspecting dictionaries, the other was examining his own bosom; while the one was toiling at languages, the other was engaged in labours of love.

There are in the English language great numbers of religious books, which cannot fall under the censure of absurdity, but are at once rational and beautiful. I wish my reader to enter on the study of religion by reading them, and he will afterwards relish real piety wherever he finds it, even though it should appear in a style of rude simplicity.

But many fashionable freethinkers are much conversant in polite and classical authors; and to pass from them to some of the simple works of mere devotees, is too violent a transition. It is for that reason that I recommend to them the sermons of the best writers; and hope they will not be so far prejudiced against them as to condemn them unexamined.

After a taste shall have been formed for religious subjects from the works of Addison, Hooker, Hammond, Taylor, Grotius, Bishop Bull, Dr. Lardner, Locke, Clarke, and all the sermon writers of the first class, the mind will learn to take a pleasure even in those books of humble piety, where the excellence of the thoughts and doctrines must shine by its own lustre, unadorned with the graces of language.

It is natural to suppose, that human inquiry will be most willingly conversant on the most important subjects. Life, death, and immortality, have in them an inherent importance, in comparison with which all other things appear like dust in the balance. There are consequently more books, I believe, in divinity than in any other department of literature.

But can I, after so many and so valuable labours, add any thing useful? I fear not; yet as religion is a subject that must frequently be considered by all who think with seriousness, I have also frequently considered it, and shall beg leave sometimes to write my thoughts of it with that humility which becomes

all men, and which perhaps may be particularly required in me.

I am struck with awe at the very subject. A poor frail mortal sits down to examine the works and words of his omnipotent Maker. If he should mistake in his conclusions, he may offend God, and lead others into dangerous temptation.

But he is encouraged by example. He is encouraged by the authority which commissions many to expound the Scriptures, and to teach the people. And if errors are errors of judgement only, unaccompanied with presumption, there is every reason to believe them venial.

General prejudices against religious writings are highly unreasonable; for what is religion but moral philosophy under a higher sanction than the best human reason could give it; what but the best efforts of human reason, controlled and directed by the will of God?

And can it be illiberal, narrow, unphilosophical, or in any respect unworthy of the most exalted of the human race, to study this will of God? to trace the beams of celestial light wherever the least glimmering appears in this darkling vale?

The study of divinity, or Christian philosophy, is a sublime employment of our faculties worthy of the greatest philosophers. What are mathematics, languages, arts, to the contemplation of the great fountain of all knowledge, of all beauty, of all excellence, the Father of Lights?

Totally to neglect the topics of religion in my Winter Evenings, would, I think, be a culpable omission; and I hope few readers are so little attentive to their chief concern as to think whatever is said on that subject, however imperfectly, destitute of interest.

After so much has been written in this country by the heroes of Christianity, I can indeed hope to add but little; but if I only turn the attention of a few to the subject, the attempt will not be useless; and what pleasure arising from polite letters and classical knowledge can equal that of seeking for one's self, and showing to others, the THINGS THAT BELONG UNTO PEACE?

Evening XLVII.

On the Character of a Parish Priest.

In the estimation of reason, few, if any, employments are more honourable than that of the pastor of a parish, the true Shepherd of his people. It is the business of his life to diffuse happiness and knowledge. His own wants, and those of his family, require some regard to pecuniary emolument, and justify an endeavour to obtain a competency; but his attention to lucre is but secondary and subordinate. His professional employment, and the purpose of his life, is the communication of happiness and knowledge: a most honourable profession, to be seeking wisdom at the fountain, and to be dispensing it liberally to all who ask for it.

I am speaking of the profession, not of the professors. I am aware that many a satirical tongue will be ready to detract from them, when compared to the profession in theory, and to exaggerate in them those human frailties which in others they would palliate. But even when I descend from the profession to the professors, I think I may affirm, that in no rank of society are more respectable members to be found than in the clerical. They ought, it will be said, to be superior in learning and virtue to others, as the master should excell his scholars, and as their studies and education tend to the advancement of human excellence to its highest perfection. Human frailty excepted, they have been, and often are, what they ought to be, in the eye of reasonable expecta-

tion. It is not possible to satisfy the demands of fanaticism, puritanism, and enthusiasm.

Dr. John Burton, a well-known classical scholar, seems to have viewed the character of a parish priest with singular admiration. He frequently speaks of it with a degree of rapture. The following passage from his *Sacerdos Parœcialis* is pleasing:

O felix studii, qui non ingloria ruris
Otia tutus agit, procul ambitione metuque!
Qui recolens quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque
Providus æternæ meditatur seria vitæ.
Gaudia despiciens peritura; Deoque vocanti,
Cujus sacra gerit, magno lætatus honore,
Impendit curas, animamque relinquit in astris.
Non illum potuit Syren, damnosa voluptas,
Flectere, non miseros agitans discordia cives,
Nec malesuadus honos, nec lucri prava cupido;
Sed pietas, cœlumque Fides amplexa, remotum
Ad majora vocat; fortunam dona ferentem
Subjiciens pedibus rigidique pericula sati,
Atque alio patriam monstrans sub sole jacentem.
Felix qui, latè turbantibus æquora ventis,
Civiles tuta prospectat ab arce tumultus,
Immunis culpæ, simul immunisque pericli!
Cætera securus sancto vacat usque labori
Sedulus et populo prodesse Deoque placere.

He proceeds to exemplify the character by the instances of Bernard Gilpin, Hooker, Herbert, and Hales. To these a long list of men might be added, of whom it is doubtful whether they had not acquired a participation of angelic perfection even in this low abode. They seem to have been sent by Providence as models of excellence, to show at what height human nature can arrive by its virtuous efforts, assisted with divine grace, notwithstanding its inherent weakness and corruption.

Many parish priests no less exemplary than these have died unknown,

———caruerunt quia vate sacro.———

Multitudes who lived in the practice of every Christian virtue, and died in the faith, truly saints, if any mortal can possess that title, now sleep in peace, with nothing over their graves but the green-sward. In the estimation of Heaven, it is probable that they were deemed more worthy of a mausoleum than kings and conquerors.

As a tree is known by its fruits, let Christianity be tried by the virtuous men it has produced. I do not think that the most celebrated philosophers among the heathens have equalled the virtue of many parish priests, who spent their days in the uniform practice of piety and benevolence; of many whose lives are accurately recorded; and of thousands more who lived and died in the obscurity which they loved, in the low-roofed vicarage of some sequestered hamlet.

But objectors are inclined to complain that the labours of the parish priest are not often attended with any remarkable effect; that parishes continue profligate, notwithstanding the preaching and example of the most pious and learned incumbent. Profligate they may be, it is true, notwithstanding these advantages; yet is it not reasonable to believe that they would be more profligate without them?

But that the clergy may possess all that weight to which their characters, their instructions, and their services entitle them, it is necessary that the richer and higher orders in their parishes should set an example of paying them respect, and co-operate with them in securing, as far as it is possible, a regular

and decent observation of the Lord's day, and of all holy ordinances.

The great requisite is, to give the clergyman of the parish AUTHORITY. But the rustic esquire and purseproud yeoman are often jealous of his influence, and, instead of augmenting, are usually ready to diminish his power by vexatious opposition. They form a party to carry every point against him in the vestry; little considering, that, in lowering the *persona ecclesiæ*, or 'the parson' (which was once a name of respect), they contribute to destroy the subordination of society, and to lessen themselves in the eyes of their inferiors. The clergy and gentry should mutually and cordially assist each other in promoting good morals, good order, and every thing conducive to social peace, to virtue in high life, and to humble industry.

These are not times in which ecclesiastics unassisted by the laity can do much towards the reformation of the public. They were once viewed with a reverence which secured obedience to their exhortations; but this was before the general prevalence of infidelity. The meanest of the vulgar have now learned to talk of the national religion as a mode of superstition, and to despise its ministers, especially when a demand is made on their property. I have seen low persons who revenged the exaction of tithes, not only on the rectors and vicars, but on the Church, on the Christian religion, and on the Bible.

Those among the inferior ranks, who still retain a reverence for religion, are too often seduced by enthusiasts from the parish church, and endeavour to evince their zeal and attachment to their self-appointed pastors, by professing a contempt, if not a hatred, for the regular minister of the parish. His

endeavour to preserve the dignity of his order is stigmatized as pride; his claim of his just dues as avarice; his rational style of preaching as the cold and languid performance of one who is labouring, for hire, in an employment which he dislikes.

These opinions are disseminated with industry; and thus the lower part of the parish are soon divided into two parts, equally inclined to obstruct the beneficial operations of the minister, the sceptical and profligate on the one hand, and the enthusiastic on the other: unless therefore the better sort unite with him, and give him that power which is necessary to accomplish the purposes of his profession, he is in danger of being set at nought, and all his endeavours may be rendered ineffectual.

A clergyman has often a difficult part to act. The times are such, that all the richer and higher people of his parish, however vulgar their minds, affect to be people of fashion. They bring into the village the manners and amusements of the metropolis. If, on one hand, he refuses to join in them, he is an unwelcome visitor among the rich; and if, on the other, he is seen too much engaged in them, he is despised by the poor.

The rich should allow him to be a little singular and reserved, without thinking him disagreeable or unfashionable. He is a public character, and stands connected with all the parish, of whatever degree, in a very intimate and important relation. It is his duty to serve both rich and poor, and in making himself agreeable to one, he must not so far forget the other as to neglect his duty and to give offence. But nothing in clergymen gives greater offence to the poor than *avoir du monde*.

Whether the parochial minister possess the grace-

ful and polite accomplishments or not, the rich parishioners should make it a point to support him with their countenance in all the duties of his office. This support of the richer parishioners appears to me to be the principal thing wanted to render the clergy efficient in promoting the great purposes of their salutary institution.

Evening XLVIII.

On the beneficial Effects of Sunday Schools.

In this free country, a strict plan of police cannot easily be established and carried into complete execution. Preventive measures and summary proceedings would often infringe that liberty which is an Englishman's glory. The consequence is, that capital punishments are more frequent here than in absolute governments.

But capital punishments, though shocking in their nature, and conducted so as to strike terror, are yet found experimentally insufficient to promote a general reformation. They cut down the tree that bears evil fruit; but it would be a more successful method to graft the stock with a more generous cion. If it is possible to meliorate the root, the tree that would otherwise have only cumbered the ground, will in time mature its beautiful blossoms to clusters of fruit equally useful and delicious.

But in what manner shall the reformation begin? Old offenders may be sometimes restrained by fear, but seldom admit an entire renovation. The experiment, therefore, must chiefly be made on the young and susceptible.

The children of the rich are usually educated with considerable expense. Whether the methods in which they are trained are the best that could be contrived, or not, it is certain that the rich cannot, from their state of independence, fall under the regulation of the charitable. Poor children, then, are the objects on which charity must exert herself in her endeavours to effect a national reform.

The majority of every nation must of necessity consist of the poor; and if the majority can be improved, there is great reason to suppose that many in the minority will receive benefit from the example; and that, upon the whole, so much good will be produced as may be said to meliorate the morals of a whole people.

Charity-schools were established with this laudable intention; and, though many plausible objections have been made to them, yet there is reason to think that, as far as they extended, they contributed considerably to the accomplishment of their original purpose. But though they are numerous, they are by no means universal; and, on their present plan, they cannot possibly comprehend all the poor children of a populous parish.

To supply their defects, and to serve many most desirable purposes, Mr. Raikes of Gloucester has instituted Sunday Schools. To the honour of the age, his example has been eagerly followed. The plan is at present only in its infancy. Time and experience can alone show, in a full and infallible light, its real utility. It is proper, however, to render it an object of general attention, that it may have the advantage of a fair trial.

They who know how much time is necessary for the instruction of children, will entertain doubts whether an hour or two, after an intermission of six days, will be sufficient for any great purpose, and whether the little that is then learned will not be obliterated from the memory by the natural effect of time, and the intervention of a variety of objects which have no relation to the Sunday's lesson. Children who go to school spend seven or eight hours every day in the week, for a year or two, before they learn to read with habitual facility.

This cannot be denied; but then it should be considered, that the superintendant may set a short task to be learned in the course of the week, such as the child can attend to with advantage, under the eye of the parents, who, though they should not be able to read, may yet, by their authority, take care that the child looks into its book during half an hour every evening, when the daily labour is concluded. Without the co-operation of parental authority I fear little will be done; with it, there is a chance that something may; and the parents themselves will derive some benefit, by virtuously endeavouring, according to the best of their power, to promote their children's improvement. If the parents can read, and are duly desirous of serving their children, they may instruct them according to the method prescribed by the teacher, and the Sunday attendance may be considered as a probationary exercise or public examination.

But if the child should not learn to read, he may yet learn something more valuable. He may learn the principles of religion, and moral honesty. He may learn to say proper prayers, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Catechism, by rote and frequent repetition; and they who know the extreme ignorance of children in the lowest rank, will not deem these contemptible acquisitions. They are such as may have a good effect on the whole lives of the labouring part of mankind, save them from many errors and crimes, and at the same time conduce to promote a spirit of piety and a due degree of obedience to law and authority.

Christianity may certainly be understood to all the purposes of salvation without much learning; and perhaps the honest labourer, who receives the plain instruction of the Sunday schoolmaster, and trea-

sures it in his heart, and acts up to the little knowledge he possesses with firm faith and true humility, is a better Christian than the learned theologist, who disputes with all the pride of syllogistic skill, and the malice of polemic strife, in the schools of divinity. Compare the child who has learned only his Catechism, to the mere vagabond, or the wretched pick-pocket in London streets, who scarcely ever heard the name of God or Jesus Christ, but in an oath or execration, who imbibes the arts of villany from his cradle, and dies by the gibbet at eighteen.

Although children should learn nothing, in consequence of the shortness of the time devoted to instruction, and the distant intervals of it, yet it is certain, that during those hours, which are the most dangerous in the week, they are kept from bad practices, and the contagion of bad examples. If they were not confined, and under the master's eye, they would be in the streets in the purlieus of the town, in the church-yard, gaming for halfpence, quarrelling, fighting, and practising every vice of which their age is capable, and which opportunities allow.

Perhaps when children are industriously and soberly brought up by their parents, and employed in sedentary manufactures during the whole week, it may be injurious to health, and quite unnecessary, to confine and employ them on the day which God intended for their rest and refreshment. It is cruelty in such a case to prevent them from enjoying air and exercise.

Indeed the institution appears to me to be most properly confined to the very lowest of the people, those who are almost vagrants, and who have scarcely a friend to assist them. The children of poor and laborious people are usually sent at their own expense to petty schools, and brought up as decently

as can reasonably be required; and to confine such as these on Sunday evenings, or to unite them even at school with the idle and vagabond, may possibly do them more injury than service.

The benefit to be derived from Sunday Schools, even to the proper object of the charity, must in every place depend greatly on the schoolmaster; and I fear the stipend usually paid is such as will not engage, after the novelty is worn off, such persons as are likely to secure attention and obedience by their wisdom or authority. Parents will not suffer a master of a degree as low as their own, to punish, in an exemplary manner, or to dictate with a decisive air to their children. Great obstacles may often arise to this institution from the pride and obstinacy of parents in low life.

But the design is generous, and it may produce greater good than many apprehend. It may contribute to preserve Christianity among us in its due vigour. It may rescue many from a wretched life, an ignominious death, and worse consequences in futurity.

Whatever doubts the cold and cautious may entertain, the sanguine zeal which its promoters display does them honour as men and Christians, and will have its reward. Whatever has so many promising appearances of being able to do great good, as the establishment of Sunday Schools, ought certainly to have a trial, and not to be rejected till the fullest experience shall have proved it ineffectual or impracticable.

The rich have so many advantages, both for enjoyment of life and the improvement of their talents, that, in gratitude for them, they ought to contribute whatever they can to the comfort and instruction of the child of poverty. Christianity teaches us to

think, that the giver of all good gifts will consider this as a grateful return to him; and experience proves, that the improvement of the poor in good morals contributes greatly to the security and accommodation of the opulent.

I am afraid, indeed, the same experience proves also, that the poor are not always made better servants, better subjects, or happier in themselves, by the little and superficial 'school attainments,' which enable them to read novels, instead of the Bible; and to write love letters, instead of keeping accounts and regulating their economy. But still no man has a right to deny them the means of improvement. The light of the sun may afford opportunity for villainous and mischievous actions, but what mortal shall presume to veil it from his fellow-mortals, even if it were possible?

Evening XLIX.

On the Character of Lord Lyttelton.

Though the first Lord Lyttelton was not of a very vigorous mind, yet, upon a review of his life and works, he appears to deserve a greater share of esteem than many are disposed to allow him. He is spoken of in the Biographical Prefaces to the English Poets, with that faint praise which amounts to contemptuous censure. But in this circumstance, he is on a level with some of the first writers and best men whom the annals of English literature have recorded. All eminent writers who were contemporaries with Johnson, were seen by him through a medium which gave an unnatural tinge to their complexions, and distorted their real shape.

Lyttelton's intellects, compared with those of his censorial biographer, were, I think, feeble. On such a comparison, he appears but as a lamb to a lion. Johnson, in the consciousness of his strength, might have allowed Lyttelton great merit, without feeling the least propensity to invidious detraction. Posterity, if not the present age, will place them both in the rank they respectively deserve. Their own decisions concerning each other will avail but little.

I wish to wave a comparison in which Lyttelton will ever appear greatly inferior. I choose rather to consider his absolute merit, both as a writer and as a man. In both these characters, considering all circumstances, he will appear worthy of national esteem; and I am the more desirous of supporting his character, because I consider him as furnishing an excellent example to young and ingenuous noble-

men, who often err by the bad models which they are accustomed to behold, and taught to admire.

The juvenile compositions of Lyttelton are to be considered merely as exercises voluntarily performed by a well-disposed young man, for the sake of his improvement in style. His Observations on the Life of Cicero, considered in this light, are certainly entitled to esteem, though they fall below the style and ingenuity of Middleton; from whose Biographical Work, however, it has lately been the fashion, very unjustly, to detract the merit that was once allowed them. The other little pieces placed at the beginning of Lyttelton's Works, are to be viewed only as prolusions and trials of skill, very meritorious, as the amusement of a man of quality, though by no means worthy of being praised as master-pieces of composition. But surely it was great virtue in Lyttelton to spend his youth in such employment, while those of his age, rank, and prospects, were usually engaged in all the follies and vices of vainglorious dissipation.

The Persian Letters do not exceed mediocrity. The plan, though by no means novel, afforded scope for wit, humour, and ingenious satire. But there is little in the Persian Letters, which a man of common abilities and common observation could not have produced. The book, however, has been popular among the young and superficial; though the observations in it are so trite and obvious, as not to attach the minds of those who are deeply read either in learning or in life.

The Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul, are so excellent in their design, and so able in the execution, that they entitle the author to a high rank among those writers whom I call the lay-divines of this country. I think Lyttel-

ton's genius was formed for divinity; and I cannot but wish that he had taken orders, and become Archbishop of Canterbury. The church would have found in him an able advocate with his pen, and a shining ornament by his example. Dr. Johnson, always a zealous friend to religion, does justice to the Observations on St. Paul, by saying of them, that they form a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer.

Such advocates for the faith as Lord Lyttelton always carry great weight, exclusively of the intrinsic force of their arguments; because they are supposed to be free from professional prejudice, and the bias of temporal advantage. Locke, Addison, Nelson, West, and Lyttelton, are volunteers in the church militant, whose prowess excited by principle alone, and arising from conviction of a righteous cause, entitles them to be considered among the most glorious soldiers of Jesus Christ. If Lyttelton had written nothing else but the Observations on St. Paul's Conversion, his fame would have been founded on a firmer basis than it stands upon at present. That foundation is of marble. Some of his other works are formed of too slight and perishable materials to support a fabric designed for posterity.

The Dialogues of the Dead have been much celebrated; but inclined as I am to favour the reputation of their author, I cannot help agreeing with the judicious critics who think that they are too little laboured; and that they are such as a man of moderate abilities and reading might have written without much study. They have neither the wit of Lucian, the grace of Fontenelle, nor the florid beauties of Fenelon. Like the Persian Letters, they appear to be best calculated for the young and su-

perficial. The three Dialogues by that highly accomplished lady, Mrs. Montagu, have, I think, more spirit than any in the collection.

The parliamentary speeches exhibit little to interest the reader, since the questions which gave rise to them have ceased to be controverted. They cannot be classed with the remains of ancient eloquence. They have nothing to be blamed, nor much to be commended. They display marks of an honest and good mind, which the old rhetoricians have said is the first quality of an orator, and they betray no want of competent ability.

The Biographical Prefacer has given no opinion of the History of Henry the Second. He has confined his narrative to the recital of a few trifling circumstances attending the publication of it; such as argue an excess of timidity in the historian, concerning the reception of his book: but such as do not affect the merits of the history, any otherwise than as they seem to imply some degree of weakness in the mind of the author.

As Johnson says nothing of this book, it is probable that he had not read it; and indeed it is rather uninviting to classical scholars, however it may please the antiquary. It is however greatly laboured. There is an abundance of matter, the result of curious research. But the style, though clear and easy, is not animated with the Roman spirit, nor elevated with classical dignity. It is, therefore, not much read by those who read for other pleasure besides that which arises from historical information. It is, however, intrinsically valuable; and becomes more estimable, when considered as the voluminous production of a man in that rank of life which is exposed to all the temptations of indolence, if not to those of vicious extravagance.

Such a history from any man would have been highly respectable; but from an opulent peer, and a man of fashion, it affords so good an example to the great, that it ought to be commended with every praise that does not amount to an unjust and adulatory encomium. It is the work of a man of sense and parts, if not of great genius; it is the work of a good man and a patriot, endeavouring to diffuse the love of virtue and of liberty. I imagined it to be the work on which the Author desired to build that fame which was to descend to future ages. He meant it as a monument durable as brass; but I doubt whether it will stand against the attacks of time.

The poems of Lord Lyttelton are, for the most part, merely the juvenile amusements of a polished mind enjoying and improving the happy opportunities of a learned leisure. Though they reach not sublimity of excellence, they display a sufficient degree of beauty to prove that their Author could have done better, if he had applied the whole force of his mind to them, and if he had made poetry his study rather than his idle diversion. They have been much read, and are still favourites among those who admire the mild efforts of the gentle muse. To judge of their merits fairly, a reader should consider the poetry that preceded, rather than that which has been subsequent to them. They have, however, a smoothness of versification, and a tenderness of sentiment, which must please the ear and the heart. Those who are in search of deep pathos and exalted grandeur, must have recourse to the Miltons and Shakespeares; but those who desire soft elegance, grace, and sentiment, will find what they wish for in the poetical playthings of Lord Lyttelton.

Having thus taken a transient view of the writer, I proceed to consider the man.

His youth appears to have been regular, and virtuous, from the letters to his father, which are highly respectful; and in a style very different from that of the libertine, and the extravagant young man of fashion and quality. I think they bear internal evidence that he was a good son.

That he was a good husband, there is every reason to believe, from the sorrow which he felt at the loss of his first wife. She died after living with him five years, in a state of happiness, said to have been rarely exceeded in the nuptial state. "He solaced his grief," as Johnson rather slightingly observes, "by writing a long poem to her memory." That poem is certainly full of tender sentiment, and seems to have come immediately from the heart of a disconsolate and undissembling mourner. Johnson himself did not lament the loss of his Tetty, in a manner so pleasing, or which bore stronger marks of sincere affection.

The second marriage of Lord Lyttelton was not so productive of happiness as the first; but the cause is not, I believe, publicly recorded, if it is clearly ascertained.

That he was a kind and indulgent father, there is every reason to believe, though his son was imprudent and unfortunate.

In public life, he was a warm friend to liberty, an indefatigable man of business, a patron of letters, as appears in the instances of Mallet and Thomson, and in every respect a good citizen, actuated by generous, wise, and patriotic principles.

Considering the whole of his character, I may pronounce that he was an ornament to the peerage, and an honour to his age.

If Lord Lyttelton does not possess the very first rank among men, it is not through a defect of great virtues, noble principles, and philanthropic purposes; but from a want of that robust vigour, and that fervent ardour of genius, which nature must supply, and art can only direct and improve. Let him be compared as a peer, a patriot, a philosopher, and a man, to his celebrated contemporary, Lord Chesterfield. By the herd of worldlings and witlings, the preference will undoubtedly be given to Lord Chesterfield; but men of solid sense and enlarged views, men of good hearts, lovers of mankind more than lovers of vanity and sordid interest, will unite their suffrages in favour of Lord Lyttelton. They will ask, in reviewing them together, whose examples and precepts are most likely to be most beneficial to society, those of the tutor of dissimulation, or those of him who taught and practised what he taught, in spite of fashion and prejudice, the love of truth, virtue, and christianity? It would be an affront to mankind to offer a formal answer to this inquiry.

But there are many, among whom I am sorry to have been obliged to enumerate Johnson, who have derogated from the character of Lyttelton, by a disrespectful mention of his name, his writings, and his conduct. Johnson was influenced by some degree of jealousy to despise one whom, as he wrote at the same time with himself, though in an inferior manner, he could not but consider as a rival in the contest for fame. Others are enemies to the memory of Lyttelton for no other reason than because they are enemies to virtue. Such persons endeavour to throw contempt on his writing, by representing the author as weak and vain. If they faintly allow him to have been a good man,

the concession is made with an expressive sneer. The detraction of persons who are themselves too deeply corrupted to see and admire the charms of a virtuous and religious character, deserves to be treated with that contempt which they are endeavouring to fix on a man deserving of honour: and every effort should be made to recommend such an example as Lyttelton's to the rising generation of nobility, who should be taught, while they shun his weaknesses, to aspire at equalling and surpassing his moral and intellectual excellence.

Evening L.

On the literary Character of Julius Cæsar.

Julius Cæsar, like the greater part of men distinguished by genius, began to display his inventive powers in the pleasant walks of poesy. In early youth he wrote a Tragedy called Œdipus, and the Praise of Hercules, which I imagine was a kind of epic poem; but Augustus prohibited the publication of them both, lest they should expose any marks of juvenile imperfection, and disgrace the imperial family. It should be mentioned also, as an instance of Julius Cæsar's industry, that he compiled a volume, to which he gave the name of *Dicta collectanea*, consisting of the remarkable apophthegms of remarkable men. Augustus suppressed this also from a scrupulous regard for the honour of the house of Cæsar.

One cannot help wishing that the juvenile productions of so distinguished a man had been preserved as curiosities. Though they might not have been exempt from the defects of immature judgement, there is every reason to conjecture that they abounded in elegance.

At a later period, this great man wrote a poem entitled *Iter*, or The Itinerary. It gave an account of his expeditious progress from Rome to Hispania ulterior; and was probably in the style and manner of Horace's *Iter Brundusium*.

I am the rather induced to believe that Cæsar wrote in the Horatian manner *sermoni propiora*, because the little specimen which remains of Cæsar's

poetry is in that style. It is the well-known fragment on Terence, preserved by Donatus.

Tu quoque, tu in summis, O dimidiate Menander, &c.

In the dialogue of an admirable author on the causes of the corruption of eloquence, there is a passage which reflects but little honour on Cæsar as a poet. Cæsar and Brutus, says he, wrote verses and deposited them in libraries; they did not make better verses than Cicero, but yet more happily, since fewer knew that they made them at all. *Non melius quam Cicero, at felicius, quia illos fecisse pauciores sciunt.*

Cæsar's verses, it is probable, were not very striking, as may be collected from an anecdote recorded of them by Plutarch. When Cæsar was taken by pirates, he solaced himself in his disagreeable situation by composing orations and verses. He read his verses to his captors, hoping to receive the flattering tribute of their applause; but the hardy adventurers had no ear for verse. Cæsar gave way to a momentary resentment, called them stupid barbarians, and affirmed that they deserved crucifixion. It cannot be supposed that he revenged the mortification his pride received, in a manner so tyrannical; but it is said that, as soon as he was liberated, he ordered the poor pirates to be nailed to the cross. Crucifixion, it is to be hoped, was a punishment for the want of honesty, and not of taste.

Notwithstanding this vindictive spirit, it would have been happy if this ambition had been poetical rather than political. It might have saved the deluge of blood through which he waded to empire. According to his own confession, the conquest of Gaul occasioned the loss of one million two hundred thousand lives; and it is supposed that the civil wars

in which he was engaged destroyed an equal number. Dreadful effects of pride! Two millions four hundred thousand lives destroyed by one man! Remarkable instance of the instability of human grandeur! for he enjoyed the peaceable possession of his power only five months!

But the present business is to consider Cæsar in the light of a scholar, not as a soldier. If his character as a poet is disputable, his talents as an orator, and his learning and sagacity as a philosopher, are highly and justly esteemed. By a rare union of different abilities he excelled at once in the elegance of polite letters, and in the severer department of recondite science.

As an orator, Cicero places him in the first rank; and Quintilian thinks he would have rivalled Cicero, had he devoted his abilities to the rostrum or tribunal. The elegance of his language was the peculiar excellence which distinguished him as an orator. He was more Attic than Cicero; and if he had transmitted his best orations down to posterity, Cicero would not have stood alone at the head of Roman orators. Cicero himself generously extols him, and thinks him equal to those who had made the study of eloquence the business of their lives.

But eloquence was cultivated by Cæsar only in subservience to his ambition. He knew that the Triumviri, in the plenitude of their usurping power, could cut off the heads and hands of mere orators, and nail them to the rostrum. He knew, that though Cicero inculcated the doctrine that arms should yield to the gown, and the laurel to the tongue, it was the sword and the axe which, in his time, carried all before it.

Amidst all the turbulence of ambition, so extensive was his capacity, that he found both time and inclination to write two books, addressed to Cicero,

on the cool and dispassionate subjects of grammatical analogy. In the dedication, he paid Cicero a great compliment, though, if we may judge from his own conduct, it was insincere. He congratulated the orator on having obtained a laurel more honourable than all military triumph, as it was more glorious to extend the limits of the Roman genius, than of the empire.

Cæsar wrote two books in opposition to Cicero's *Laus Catonis*, in which Cato Uticensis had been celebrated with all the warmth of panegyric. Cæsar considered the praise of Cato as a reflection on himself, and published his answer in two orations, to which he gave the name *Anti-Catones*.

The speeches were in the form of accusations before a judge; and, I believe, they were conducted with temper, for Cæsar praises Cato in the midst of his invective. He was too much master of his temper to suffer it to be indecently disturbed by critical controversy, and he was sufficiently politic to know, that to deny a merit which was become notorious, would injure the cause of which he had undertaken the defence.

One of the principal topics of Cæsar's satire was Cato's ebriety. But he relates an anecdote of it which redounds to the honour of Cato's general character. Cato returning one morning from a convivial meeting, in a state of inebriation, was met by some young men, who were determined to see whom they had encountered. They uncovered his face, and found it Cato. They no sooner saw him than they blushed on their own account, for having taken such a liberty with so great a man. You would have imagined that they had been detected in an improper state by Cato, and not Cato by them; so great was their confusion: and hence it is evident, that in

the midst of drunkenness, Cato's character was respectable, and retained the dignity of superior virtue. Cæsar could not have paid Cato a greater compliment, or allowed him more personal authority, than by relating this story, in which Cato, even when divested of his reason by excess, was yet an awful character.

I imagine Cæsar, in the liberality and urbanity of a cultivated mind, conducted this controversy in a good-humoured manner, and rather more for the pleasure and amusement of it, than from a resentful desire to detract from Cato, whom his enemies allowed to be a good man and a good citizen. Every one knows that he was fond of wine; and Horace seems to think that his virtue, by which is meant his 'manly' spirit, acquired warmth from the juice of the grape.

> Narratur et prisci Catonis
> Sæpe mero caluisse virtus.

The effect of Cæsar's knowledge in astronomy is felt at this hour, in the reformation of the Calendar. Cæsar is represented in Lucan, as saying of himself,

> ——media inter prælia semper
> Stellarum cœlique plagis superisque vacavi.

He was a lover of the science, and excelled in it; but there is reason to believe, that, in the Julian Calendar, he was assisted or directed by Sosigenes, the astronomer, who had derived his knowledge from the banks of the Nile. It is probable that superstition, and not ignorance only, prevented the reformation from taking place, before Cæsar gave it the sanc-

tion of his authority, and received, in return, the whole honour of the invention.

Cæsar's Commentaries are too well known to admit of much animadversion upon them. They are evidently formed on the model of Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Their language is pure, and flows with that ease and perspicuity, which has induced readers unanimously to compare it to a gentle and beautiful river, whose surface is smooth, and waters pellucid. They who lament the want of political observations in them, and of masterly strokes of animated eloquence, should remember that Cæsar professed only to write commentaries, and not a just and legitimate history *.

There is not much remaining of this great man's composition †; but there is enough to induce us to lament that he did not use the pen more than the sword. Poggius maintains, with great force of argument, that in military merit, his first object, he was greatly inferior to Scipio.

Pliny the elder seems to think vigour of mind the distinguishing character of Cæsar. He means not firmness and resolution only; but a peculiar celerity and irresistible force, which can be compared to nothing more aptly than to fire. He could, at the same time, read and write, and listen with attention. He has been known to dictate to his amanuenses six or seven letters at once. Who but must lament that

* *Justam legitimamque* historiam: a classical mode of expression; but naturalized by Bishop Warburton and Bishop Hurd.

† Besides those already mentioned, Cæsar wrote the following works, which are lost—Nine capital Orations, besides some smaller ones, on particular occasions; several books of Epistles, at least sixteen; *Libri Auspiciorum*, *Auguralia*; and some affirm that he translated Aratus's *Phænomena*. Other things are attributed to him, but, it is supposed, erroneously

ambition stole him from the Muses? He might have spent all his fire, and acquired immortal fame, in composing an epic poem, or the history of his country, without shedding a drop of blood, or breaking one widow's or orphan's heart; and with the praise and delight of all posterity.

EVENING LI.

On the Æsopian Fables as a School Book for very young Children.

I THINK it may admit of a doubt, whether the presenting of the common fables, which are called Æsopian, to infant minds, is the most eligible mode of communicating those first ideas, which are said to be of the greatest consequence, and of the longest duration.

I object not to the moral, which is excellent, if the child could find it out: but the child thinks of nothing but the narrative, and perhaps, in the childish age, ought to think of nothing else. What has the infant of six or seven years to do with the cunning maxims of the world? The great business is, at that time, to open the mind in the pleasantest manner, by representing agreeable images, and by exciting and gratifying curiosity.

The images of animals, dogs, horses, bulls, peacocks, are very agreeable to children; and as fables exhibit such images, they are so far proper for their elementary instruction. But the objection is to that shocking violation of truth and nature, which represents the irrational and mute creation reasoning and conversing by articulate language *.

Children naturally love truth, and when they read a story, their first question is, whether is it true? If they find it true, they are pleased with it; if not, they value it but little, and it soon becomes insipid. But they either immediately know that a story, in which a dog or a horse is represented speaking, is

* Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic incredulus odi. HOR.

false; or, if they believe it true, it contradicts their experience, and confounds all their ideas, so that they hardly know how to trust the evidence of their senses.

The reasoning and conversation of irrational animals raise them to a level with the human species; and if children are to respect reason and speech as most excellent gifts, they will, in their imaginations, honour the cock, the wolf, and the fox, as much as man, or else degrade man to the rank of the cock, the wolf, and the fox.

Is zoology a valuable part of knowledge, and confessedly useful and pleasing to children? Then why mislead them in their first ideas of animals around them, by attributing to animals not only speech and reason, but a thousand actions, instincts, and contrivances, totally different from those which are natural?

While I am writing, I open Croxall, and I see a print of a cat hanging by the hinder legs, on a peg, and pretending to be dead, in order to entice the mice to come down. A child of strong sense will say, How could a cat tie her hinder legs together in such a manner as to hang herself up as represented? and have cats such refined subtilty? I mention this instance out of a hundred others, merely because I accidentally open the book at that fable. As the cat is an animal with which children are in general well acquainted, any unnatural representation of it will immediately be detected and despised.

The style and language of all the Æsopian fables now in use, is generally above the comprehension of those by whom alone they are read. Croxall's is at the same time a very mean style. Dodsley's, indeed, is a far better; but, in search of fine language, he has deviated greatly from simplicity, and rendered

his fables unintelligible to those for whom they are chiefly designed.

L'Estrange's vulgarity, indelicacy, and foolish politics, deservedly condemn his book to oblivion. His book is nauseously vulgar, and fit only for the jakes. I cannot admire either his or Croxall's applications. They are, indeed, seldom read by children, and serve only to swell the volumes. They are too long, and too badly written, to serve for the instruction of young scholars. Two or three lines of application, in the manner of Phædrus, would have answered the purpose much better.

As to the propriety of Croxall's language, that I may not be thought to choose the worst specimens, I will quote three or four lines of his first fable, and leave it to the reader to judge how well it is adapted to children.

"A brisk young cock," says he, "in company with two or three pullets, *his mistresses*, raking upon a dunghill for something to entertain them with, happened to scratch up a jewel. *He knew what it was well enough*," &c. I say nothing of the absurdity of giving children an idea that a cock 'knows what a jewel is well enough.' I only animadvert on the ordinary mode of expression. It aims at humour without reaching it; and is totally destitute of that elegant simplicity, in which a narrative of this kind should be presented to children. It were easy to fill a volume with the vulgarisms and absurdities of Croxall's Æsopian fables.

But yet, for want of a better, this book, with the help of the wooden cuts, has served to entertain children. All I contend for is, that it is not adapted to the use of children by the author, neither is it, in itself, fit for them. It is at once too high and too low for their purpose.

Are Gay's fit for children? Not for very young ones. They are far above their comprehension. They are not entirely intelligible to children under twelve or fourteen, unless in rare cases of premature improvement and sagacity. But some book is wanted that shall be in general calculated for all children at that period, when the mind, like the rosebud, is half closed and half expanded.

Fables are proper; but what fables? Only those among the Æsopian, in which the animals do not speak, and do not act inconsistently with their nature.

But by 'fables,' I mean, what the word properly means, '*stories in general*,' and not those of Æsop only. Those of Æsop, after all that has been said on the propriety of children's reading them, are fitter for men than children, and were originally addressed to men on momentous occasions. They are seldom read by children, so as to afford the very sage and important instruction which their inventors intended to convey in this artful and insinuating mode.

I recommend 'fables' of another kind, for the purpose of initiation; that is, 'tales,' which paint pictures in the imagination, affect the heart, excite laughter, or powerfully interest and indulge curiosity.

If it should be asked, Where are such to be found? I cannot immediately answer: but I can say, without hesitation, who could compose them with judgement and genius. The reader will conjecture that I mean that lady who published some admirable Lessons and Hymns for Children *. Almost every word in those books is judiciously selected, and they

* Printed for Johnson —— Mrs. Trimmer's and the late Mr. Day's books have a great deal of merit in this way.

are so entertaining, that children read without considering them as a task, just as they should do; the delight beguiling the labour,

Studio fallente laborem. Hor.

A volume of fables by that lady, consisting of the best and most rational of the Æsopian, and of other entertaining narratives, whether with a moral expressed, or not, would be a most valuable present to the rising generation. One would almost wish for infancy again, for the pleasure of reading it, and escaping dull lessons in spelling-books, dull fables in Croxall, and a hundred other dismal and dreary moralities, which have little other tendency than to make the young mind loath the sight of a book, and hate those things which, properly managed, afford an exquisite delight, by painting to the imagination and gratifying curiosity.

Evening LII.

On the literary Character of Oliver Goldsmith.

Ingenii largitor venter.

The old saying *Vexatio dat intellectum* *, I am sorry to observe, seems to have received some confirmation from the instances of many ingenious men †, worthy of a better fate. To the distresses which poets have felt, are often attributed the finest of their poems; but, perhaps, it may be justly urged, that their industry, and not their abilities, was increased or excited by distress. This indeed is partly true, but not entirely. They must have had abilities inherent in them, or they could not have been excited; according to that vulgar observation, that it is impossible to get blood out of a stone; but, at the same time, there is every reason to believe that their abilities were actually improved by that thoughtfulness and attention which distress has a tendency to produce.

And yet, with respect to poetry, a diversity of opinions prevails on the effects of distress: for, while the author in my motto says that hunger gives ingenuity, another informs us, that the mind must be free from anxiety in order to make good verses, nor be troubled with the care of procuring a blanket. Horace has his belly full of wine and dainties when he calls on the name of Bacchus with all the frantic enthusiasm of poetry ‡.

* Vexation improves the understanding.

† *Digni meliore fato.*

‡ Anxietate carens animus [versus] facit, omnis acerbi
Impatiens, nec de lodice parandâ
Sollicitus; satur est cum dicit Horatius, Euœ. Juvenal.

I am afraid Juvenal, who is rather given to declamation, asserted this doctrine without a due attention to actual experience: for in his time, as well as ours, poverty seems to have had a favourable influence on poetry. Many instances may be produced of this truth in the annals of modern literati; and I believe we may add to the number the name of Oliver Goldsmith.

From his want of attention to that œconomy which dunces often pay, and are very happy in consequence of it, he spent his life in penury. But his mind was rich, and dispensed a portion of its opulence to provide sustenance for its partner. To his distresses the literary world is indebted for a few very fine compositions. In the school of affliction he learned to feel, or at least to exercise those feelings which his writings express with so much sensibility. His genius was called forth by want; and when once he began to feel his strength, he relied on it for support. He who writes for support, will often write when necessity urges, rather than when genius impels, and the consequence will be a great inequality.

Goldsmith, though a good writer in prose, appears to me to owe his most solid reputation to poetry.

Edwin and Angelina is one of the most popular pieces in the language; perhaps it stands next in the favour of the people to Gray's delightful Elegy. Its general reception proves that its beauties are generally felt, and need not be pointed out by the subtle remarks of critical refinement. The language and sentiments are delicate. The sentiments came from a tender heart, and the language was dictated by a most elegant taste. Who but must lament that he who felt so tenderly, and wrote so sweetly, often wanted a shilling to provide him with his daily bread? But he was compassionate to every child of

misfortune, and generous beyond the rules of prudence.

> For tō the houseless child of want
> His door was open still,
> And, though his portion was but scant,
> He gave it with good will.

In the Traveller he adopts a different style of poetry; but in the strong and nervous language of a Dryden, a Tickel, or of an Addison (in his letter to Lord Halifax), he exhibits the same fine vein of exquisite sensibility.

The first ten lines constitute a poetical paragraph not often exceeded in magnificence of style and tenderness of affection, by any verses in the English language; and the subsequent passages are seldom inferior in strength, and often exceed it in imagery. The whole breathes a manly spirit, and a love of human nature, of liberty, and of his country. It is one of those poems which, among the numbers which daily sink in the gulf of oblivion, will glide along the stream of time to late posterity. It is formed to be placed in the rank of classics, because it addresses at once the bosom and the fancy. Such feelings are raised by it, as must please always and universally; and this is indeed the effect of all the works which live and flourish in ages distant from their production, when the arts of conciliating favour and exciting attention, and when partiality and personal interest operate no more.

Next in reputation to the Traveller, stands his Deserted Village. The subject did not require so nervous a style as the Traveller; but it required sweetness, tenderness, simplicity; and in these most delightful graces it richly abounds. The poet every where displays in it a zeal for the happiness of man-

kind in the lower ranks of society, and a detestation of that pride, vice, and luxury, and of those deviations from nature and primitive simplicity, which enormous opulence contributes to introduce.

The versification has in it something original. It is excellently adapted to the subject, though it is unlike that of Pope, Dryden, or any predecessor. There is something in its flow remarkably pathetic. It came from the heart; and the imagination only added the beautiful tinges of poetical colouring.

The public, who in a length of time are always found to decide with solidity of judgement, though often too hasty in their first applause, have selected all the more striking passages of the poem, and almost committed them to memory. The village preacher, the village schoolmaster, and the village alehouse, are drawn with affection, and have recommended themselves to the attention of every sympathizing reader.

I have known fastidious critics of reputed learning, who pretended that they could see no superior excellence in these poems, and suggested that the popularity of a poem was in their minds a suspicious circumstance, and led them to conclude, *primâ facie*, that it was of little intrinsic value. But it may be fairly concluded that such persons, actuated by envy, undervalue what they have been unable to obtain; and, like the fox in the fable, stigmatize, as unworthy their endeavours, the grapes which they cannot reach.

Men of logical and mathematical heads are apt to view a poem principally with an eye to its plan, to the mechanical circumstances of method, and the regular disposition of the component parts; but such persons have indeed no juster idea of real beauty in a poem, than a common stonemason or bricklayer,

who works by rule and line, of magnificence and grace in a fine piece of architecture.

A poem is indeed the more perfect, the more regular its plan; but there are graces beyond the reach of art, and these will fully compensate, when they abound, for the want of mechanical regularity. Horace says, in the style of critical legislation,

Dulcia sunto—

Let poems 'give pleasure,' and they will be read, while critics rail unheard or unregarded.

Goldsmith was buried in Poets' Corner, and he is chiefly to be considered as a poet; for though his prose is animated, and contains many fine images expressed in vivid language, yet it is incorrect and unequal, the hasty production of necessity working against inclination.

His Citizen of the World has, with many good papers, many absurd ones, and many written in a careless manner. It will never hold a distinguished place in a select library.

Some of his Essays are beautiful. There is a delicacy of phrase, and a tenderness of affection in many of them, and the author has attempted humour on several subjects with success; but here also is something of inequality, incorrectness, and absurdity.

As a dramatist, his genius verged to the farcical. His Vicar of Wakefield I think the best of his prosaic writings. It speaks to the heart, and causes such an interest, as leads the understanding to connive at a very great degree of improbability.

The Histories of Greece, Rome, and England, are merely compilations, hastily finished for the temporary supply of money; and though they are not without animated passages, cannot be raised higher in the scale of literature than the rank of school-books.

Goldsmith had a great taste for natural history, and wished, as I heard him say, to write something in the manner of the elder Pliny. But he had not a sufficient share of science to qualify him for the performance. In his *Animated Nature*, he therefore had recourse to compiling, and, I believe, descended to mere translation. What he wrote himself displays his genius to advantage, but not his accuracy; and, upon the whole, he appears to have been more solicitous to write an entertaining than a solid book. It may please and improve school-boys and superficial readers; but scholars and philosophers will rather choose to draw from the fountains which supplied his stream; a stream which, it must be confessed, in the present case, often runs like a shallow rivulet.

Want made him write much, and rather on subjects suggested by his paymasters than by the unbiassed feelings of his own genius. The lumber of the compilations will sink in the gulf of oblivion; but the poems will glide on to posterity. Their style and pathos have been well imitated by Mr. Crabbe in his Village; nor is the loss of a Goldsmith's descriptive and sentimental strain unsupplied by a Cowper.

Evening LIII.

On some remarkable Latin Epigrams.

I was lately reading an impassioned copy of verses in an epigrammatist, celebrated in his time, one Bernardus Bauhusius, and could not help being struck with the impropriety of its conclusion. After the tenderest exclamation it ends in a pun. The subject is *Ecce homo*, too serious an one to admit of witticism; and I believe the writer, in attempting wit upon it, complied with the taste of the times without the least intention to be unbecomingly jocular.

Ecce meus Jesus pro me, livorque, cruorque,
 Et tabum, et sanies! Ecce homo, nullus homo!
Ecce homo, qui pro me!——sed flendum est——currite, ocelli,
 In duo flumina, mî lumina, liquimini.
Ite, piæ guttæ, pallentes currite rivis,
 Grandibus, indomitis, tabificis lachrymis.
Quid? nondum ulla venit? cessatis, lumina? saltèm
 Unica——saltem una, O guttula parva, veni.
Me miserum! non ulla venit, non prosilit ulla!
 O pie Christe, quis est, quem tu *adamas?* adamas.

I add a few epigrams, from the same author, who is now little known, for the entertainment of the classical reader. The following is on the three grand enemies of man, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, imitated, I think, by Parnell:

TRES HOMINIS HOSTES.

Unum grammaticum, logicumque et rhetora vita:
 Hos modò vitâris, cetera tuta tibi.
Quis rhetor?—*Mundus*;—fallax logicus?—*Cacodæmon*;
 Semper declinans, est *Caro*, grammaticus.

The following is a part of an epigram on the bed of the new-born infant Jesus, and a curious specimen of the taste of the times. The poet laments the coldness of the bed.

IN LECTULUM DULCISSIMI INFANTIS JESU, RECENS NATI.

Conde sinistellam, dextellam, *Jesule*, conde.
Conde, puelle, aures, conde, puelle, caput.
Oscula, parvule, conde, labella, tenerrima conde,
Hoc tege lumen et hoc, hoc tege tempus et hoc.—
O ego, mi Jesu, tuus O! si lectulus essem,
Te, te ego, vel fuso sanguine, calfacerem.
Sic ego; sed contra mater: "non *sanguine* gaudet
"Ille meus dulcis, melleus ille meus;
Poscit *aquam*"—jam nunc dabimus, dulcissime virgo,
An multam?—"multam"—num gelidam?—"calidam:"
Num dulcem?—"falsam:"—de flumine?—"lumine"—fonte?
"Fronte"—Ohe satis est, jam dabo, virgo, dabo."

Who is not ready to say with the poet, *Ohe satis est?*

He thus concludes an epitaph on Arias Montanus, the celebrated linguist. After enumerating almost all the known languages, in which he says Montanus was completely skilled, he adds well enough,

Angelicam optavit linguam quoque discere; Christus
Audiit, angelicum sustulit inque chorum.

But the grand effort of genius, on which the poet values himself not a little, is the following. It has been noticed in the Spectator. He calls it a verse making one book, and a book consisting of one verse. But I will give it and its title in the poet's own words:

"Divæ, optimæ, maximæque matri virgini Mariæ admirabilem hunc *Unius libri versum, unius versus librum*, Christianum Proteum, tot ora scilicet quot cœlum sydera gerentem (verti enim potest millies, bis et vicies, sensu salvo et heroici carminis lege)

nostri in cœli reginam affectus monumentum hoc ponimus sempiternum:

Tot tibi sunt dites, virgo, quot sidera cœlo.

In eodem hoc Proteo retrogrados versus pœne centum est invenire."

Another, which he thinks a superior effort, follows:

"Deo optimo maximo, æterno Dei filio Christo Jesu mundi servatori *Proteus* e variis sacrarum literarum locis depromptus, priori longe admirabilior, nam sensu salvo, et heroici carminis lege, verti potest 3,628,800, scilicet tricies, sexies, centies, millies vicies octies millies et octingenties.

Rex, dux, sol, lex, lux, fons, spes, pax, mons, petra, CHRISTUS."

What a laborious calculation for a poet!

In a florid epigram, of some length, he gives his *heart* to Christ, and exhorts the sons of men to do likewise, concluding thus:

Corda date.—O qui dat, quam sine corde sapit!

Of St. Stephen, who rejoiced while he was stoned, he says,

Siccine amat lapides?—sic certe—nonne *Corona* *
Ornari multo pulchra velit lapide?

His epigrammatic remark on the physician, is not in a bad taste:

Res misera medicus est, cui nunquam bene est
Nisi male sit quamplurimis.

In his aspirations after the heavenly flame, he exclaims,

O amor! O desiderium! mea fax, meus ignis,
Cur me sic uris? cur?——quia tam *procul es.*

* i. e. Στεφανος.

The beggar's speech is striking:

De Deo loquor libenter, non libenter audio.

His hint to a sturdy beggar deserves attention from the mendicant order;

Mosce, quid æra petis? vili quid de stipe vivis?
Alcidæ nervos, ossa Milonis habes.
Vah pudeat!—Sum pauper, ais; mentire; supersunt
En bini census, dextra, sinistra, tibi.

The following, written under a *half*-length figure, contains a fine compliment:

Dimidium pinxit quæ dextera *Borromæum*,
Nòrat quod totum pingere nemo potest.

Another good epitaph on Arias Montanus:

Hoc *Syrus* in tumulo est, *Hebræus*, *Graius*, et *Auson*
Verus item, non teter et ustus, *Arabs*.
"Quinque homines," inquis?—ne, lector, fallere; namque
Graius, is et Latius, qui Syrus ille et Arabs,
Hebræusque *idem* est; nempe hic est magnus *Arias*,
Qui, *patriâ*, *unus* homo; *quinque* sed, *ore*, fuit.

The use of religious love and fear:

Ut fugiam scelus omne, et amem super omnia numen,
Da mihi fræna, timor, da mihi calcar, amor.

But I will add no more, lest I weary the reader, whom I wish, for a moment, to amuse.

Bernardus Bauhusius, like most of the sons of Loyola, possessed learning and ingenuity, and the absurdities of his manner are to be attributed to the erroneous taste of his age. There are some kinds of false wit as entertaining from their absurdity as the true. It is the *mediocris poeta*, the middling poet, the insipid race who want sense to be right, and spirit to be wrong, whom Horace means when he says, neither gods nor men, nor the booksellers shops can

tolerate them. It would be injustice to Bauhusius not to allow that he has many elegant lines and phrases, and some epigrams in the truly classical taste, with sense and beauty in the beginning and middle, and with point at the end.

I will dismiss this subject with the poet's own apology.

POETA AD MUSAM SUAM.

Serpere te momi dicunt, nimiumque jacere,
Increpat et soccos ille vel ille tuos.
Ne tamen hoc teneras urat tibi,—Musa, medullas,
Serpunt et violæ et dulcia fraga *jacent*.

The modern Latin poets, though at present neglected, were much read, and often imitated by Pope, Addison, Parnell, and most of the wits of their age.

Evening LIV.

On the most effectual Means of promoting Self-Complacency.

There is a kind of self-complacency which arises solely from excessive self-conceit. A person under the influence of this foible imagines every thing which he says or does excellent, and every thing that belongs to him superior to the very same thing in the possession of his neighbour. According to the common adage, his geese are all swans. This quality renders a man completely ridiculous, and is indeed utterly inconsistent with good sense and the obvious suggestions of common experience.

But there is also another kind of self-complacency, which is founded on solid and virtuous principles, and is the cause of one of the most substantial satisfactions which human nature can enjoy. I mean to enumerate a few of the means which have a natural tendency to produce it.

The offices of Christian piety are attended with pleasure of a species no less durable than exalted. It was this which induced Erasmus to declare in a serious sense, that there are no greater 'Epicures' than 'pious Christians.' What can contribute more to pleasure than the consequence of piety, the calm serenity of reliance and resignation?

To please one's self, such is the happy constitution of things, nothing contributes more effectually than the 'communication of innocent pleasure to others.' I say innocent pleasure; for it is the nature of guilt to add a bitter infusion to the sweetest cup of human delight.

'Acts of pure Christian charity,' unmixed with ostentation, leave a relish behind them which few gratifications equal or resemble. I have no doubt but that the internal sensations of a truly charitable man, after having unostentatiously relieved a person in great and urgent distress, are more pleasurable than those of the most celebrated conqueror: and I imagine the good Samaritan and Mr. Hanway enjoyed greater delight than was usually experienced by Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Charles the Twelfth, Frederick King of Prussia, or Lord Clive. The blood seems to run more smoothly in its channels after a benevolent action; so that the delight of it, while perfectly pure, may at the same time be denominated a sensual pleasure. It is a delight also which may be recalled at will, and it affords peculiar solace under sickness and affliction.

As the state of man is progressive, Providence has been pleased to ordain that the steps of his 'improvement' should be attended with complacency. Whether the improvement is moral or mental, the pleasure is great which accompanies it. A man feels himself rising in value by every new acquisition of good qualities. To be advancing more and more, by daily approaches, to attainable perfection, is a state so pleasant, that it may be said to resemble the ascent up a beautiful hill, where the prospect over variegated meadows, meandering streams, forests, distant roofs and spires, becomes at every step more delightful.

'Industry' in laudable pursuits is a never-failing source of internal satisfaction. It causes a pleasing succession of ideas, by bringing new objects, or a change of circumstances, continually in view. And if it is conversant with matters of importance, and attended with success, there is no state so happy as

that of an industrious man in the exercise of his skill and abilities.

'To have subdued an irregular or excessive passion,' and to have resisted a mean, a vicious, a degrading inclination, affords a pleasing consciousness of virtuous resolution; a sensation so agreeable and flattering, as could not have been equalled by indulgence or compliance with it; and has this additional advantage, that it is not followed by pain, remorse, or any consequences which can occasion shame or sorrow. On the contrary, after the gratification of vice or irregularity, a man feels himself little and low; he despises himself, and recovers not his happiness, till, by contrition or amendment, he regains a due degree of self-esteem.

'No bad man,' says the heathen poet, 'is a happy man.' *Nemo malus felix**. He is perhaps for ever in pursuit of enjoyment; but he feels agitations and anxieties that detract much from his pleasures; and his reflections upon them, and their consequences to himself, his family, and many others, become, at least in the solitary hours of dejection, ill-health, or of night alone, extremely uneasy. So that it is not merely the declamation of a preacher, but the decision of experience arising from actual fact, which pronounces that a good conscience is necessary to the true enjoyment of life.

No man can have a conscience perfectly void of offence; but whoever has violated it reluctantly, and repented as often as he has transgressed, may be said to have a good conscience; and a treasure that is more to be desired than the golden stores continually brought from the East, by men, whom Providence suffers to become enormously rich, to

* Juvenal.

show that enormous riches are no decisive marks of its peculiar favour.

How sweet the slumbers of him who can lie down on his pillow and review the transactions of every day, without condemning himself! A 'good conscience' is the finest opiate. The *materia medica* cannot supply one half so efficacious and pleasant; and all the nabobs together, if they were to unite their fortunes in contribution, could not purchase a similar one.

'Good health,' preserved by temperance and regularity, gives a sweetness to life, a pleasantness of feeling which no civil honours or secular prosperity can bestow.

'Prudential œconomy' in the management of expenses, and the confining of them to the certain income, so as not to be incumbered with debt, or distressed by the invention of ways and means to raise supplies for the current year, exempt from ten thousand painful solicitudes, and give an ease and calmness of spirits unknown to the most opulent who possess not this caution; a caution equally required by prudence and common honesty. To see, in consequence of it, a family rising to independence, not likely to be exposed to the scorn and ill usage of the world, affords a comfort more satisfactory than the fugacious pleasures of ostentatious extravagance.

Self-esteem, founded on rational principles, is one of the first requisites to a happy life; and to the honour of virtue and religion, let it be remarked, that it is attainable only by a benevolent, a wise, a prudent conduct. Men who, by early education, by happily falling among good examples, by reading good books, and by forming good habits in consequence of all these advantages, conduct them-

selves in all things with reason, with moderation, and with kindness;—these are they, who, after all the pretensions of voluptuousness, enjoy the most of this world; for their happiness flows like a gentle stream uninterrupted in its course, uniform and constant; while that of others is like a torrent, which dashes from rock to rock, all foam, all noise for a little while, till it is lost in the ocean, or wasted away by its own violence. It is destructive of others, destructive of itself, and too turbulent to admit of pure tranquillity.

Let those who have wandered in pursuits which themselves are ready to acknowledge delusive and unsatisfactory, resolve, by way of experiment, to try whether the pleasure of that self-esteem which arises from rectitude of conduct, is not the most pleasing possession which this world affords; whether it does not promote a constant cheerfulness and gaiety of heart, which renders life a continual feast. The path of duty, comparatively speaking, is strewed with flowers and sweetened with fragrance. To the timid, the slothful, and ill-disposed, the first entrance may appear to be closed with briars; but he who has courage to break through the difficulties raised by his own imagination, will find himself in as pleasant a walk as is to be found beneath the moon. But I will not draw a deceitful picture with the colours of rhetoric. Much uneasiness and some sorrow must be the lot of every man in his present state; I only contend that the pleasantness of wisdom and virtue is not fictitious, and that he who faithfully adheres to them will, upon the whole, enjoy all the delight of which his nature and his situation render him capable.

Many philosophers maintain that selfishness is the spring of all our activity. Whether their system is

well founded or not, it is certain that, in pursuit of the pleasure of rational self-esteem, we may be as selfish as we please without incurring the disgrace of meanness; for to the indulgence of this kind of selfishness it is necessary to cultivate every thing liberal, generous, useful, amiable. The pleasure arising from it is not unsocial, though it centres in self; for it is not to be enjoyed but by promoting the good of society. The pleasure is the first reward which Providence has vouchsafed to assign to the honest efforts of humble virtue, a reward infinitely disproportionate to that reserved for it in a better state, but still of a pure, of a celestial nature, and great enough to excite the most ardent efforts in its acquisition.

What happiness can subsist without this essential ingredient, self-complacency? External circumstances are of no value without it. The gold loses its lustre, and the purple its glossy dye, without it. Titles, rank, power, property, the grand idols of a prostrate world, are deceitful and empty, whenever the delicious tranquillity of a mind soothed to rational complacency is a stranger to the bosom.

There is this additional advantage in being pleased with one's self, on solid reasons, that it puts one in good humour with the world. All nature seems to smile with us; and our hearts, dilating with conscious virtue and benevolence, feel a new delight in the communication of happiness.

Evening LV.

On the Affectation of excessive Sensibility.

Belinda was always remarkably fond of pathetic novels, tragedies, and elegies. Sterne's sentimental beauties were her peculiar favourites. She had indeed contracted so great a tenderness of sensibility from such reading, that she often carried the amiable weakness into common life, and would weep and sigh as if her heart were breaking at occurrences, which others by no means deficient in humanity viewed with indifference. She could not bear the idea of killing animals for food. She detested the sports of fishing and hunting, because of their ineffable cruelty. She was ready to faint if her coachman whipt his horses when they would not draw up hill; and she actually fell down in a fit on a gentleman's treading on her favourite cat's tail as he eagerly stooped to save her child from falling into the fire.

Being rather of a romantic turn, she would frequently utter sentimental soliloquies on benevolence and humanity; and when any catastrophe of a pathetic nature occurred, she generally gave vent to her feelings by writing a lamentation. I procured from one of her friends the following piece, with liberty to present it to the public eye.

Belinda, it seems, was at her toilette, adorning her tresses, when an animalcule of no great repute in the world, and who often obtrudes where he is not welcome, fell from her beautiful tresses on her neck. In the first emotions of her surprise and anger she

seized the little wretch, and crushed it between her nails, till it expired with a sound—

Δουπησεν δε πεσων,

as Homer expresses the exit of his heroes.

The noise and the sight of the viscera soon recalled her sensibility, and she thus expressed it:

"Thou poor partaker of vitality, farewell. Life undoubtedly was sweet to thee, and I have hastily deprived thee of it. But surely the world was wide enough for thee and me. And it was ungenerous to murder one who sought an asylum under my fostering protection.

"Because thou art minute, we are inclined to suppose thee insensible. But doubtless thou hadst nerves and delicate sensations proportioned to the fineness of thy organs. Perhaps thou hadst a partner of thine affections and a numerous progeny, whom thou sawest rising to maturity with parental delight, and who are now left destitute of a protector in their helpless infancy.

"Thy pain is indeed at an end; but I cannot help deploring the unfeeling cruelty of those who deprive the smallest reptile, to whom nature has given breath, of that life which, though it appears contemptible in the eyes of the thoughtless, yet is sweet to the meanest animal—*was* sweet to thee, thou poor departed animalcule! Alas, that I must now say *was sweet* to thee! Did I possess the power of resuscitation, I would reanimate thy lifeless corpse, and cherish thee in the warmest corner of thy favourite dwelling-place.—But adieu for ever; for my wish is vain. Yet if thy shade is still conscious, and hovers over the head it once inhabited, pardon a hasty act

of violence, which I endeavour to expiate with the tear of sympathy and the sigh of sensibility.

Flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli.

I am informed that the drawer of her writing-table is full of elegies and elegiac sonnets on rats and mice caught in traps, and of tom-tits and robin-redbreasts killed by school-boys. I remember to have heard a most pathetic elegy recited on the death of a red-breast, much in Belinda's style, but I can only recollect one pathetic *Erotesis:* "Who kill'd Cock Robin?"

There is also a sublime deification of an earth-grub which she once accidentally trod upon as she was endeavouring to rescue a fly from a spider in the garden. It concludes thus:

> But cease to weep—no more to crawl
> In the dank earth beneath yon wall,
> On snow-white pinions thou shalt rise,
> And claim thy place in yonder skies.
>
> BELINDA'S *Effusions of Sentiment.*

Efts, toads, bats, every thing that hath life, have a claim to her tenderest compassion. And certainly her tenderness to them does her honour; but the excessive sensibility which their slightest sufferings seem to occasion, gives room to suspect that she is not without affectation. What is so singular and excessive can scarcely be natural.

Having heard and observed so much of her delicate feelings for the irrational creation, I was naturally led to make inquiries concerning her behaviour in the more interesting attachments of social life. I expected to find that—she, of course,

> Like the needle true,
> Turn'd at the touch of joy or woe,
> And, turning, trembled too.

The following is the result of my investigation. Her temper was so various and violent that her husband was often obliged to leave his home in search of peace. I heard he had just recovered from a fit of illness, during the whole of which she had seldom visited him, and shown no solicitude. She had sat weeping over a novel on the very day on which his fever came to a crisis, and the physicians had declared his recovery dubious. On his recovery, he had gone a voyage to the East Indies, by her advice, for the improvement of his fortune. He took leave of her very affectionately; but she was dressing to go and see Mrs. Siddons in Calista, and could not possibly spend much time in a formal parting, which was a thing she above all things detested. But, let it be remembered, she duly fainted away in the boxes, on Mrs. Siddons's first entrance, before the actress had uttered a single syllable.

Two fine little boys were left under her care without controul, during their father's absence. The little rogues had fine health and spirits, and would make a noise, which she could not bear, as she was busy in preparing to act a capital part in the Orphan, at a private theatre built by a man of fortune and fashion for his own amusement. She determined therefore to send the brats to school. Indeed she declared in all companies, she thought it the first of a mother's duties to take care that her children were well educated. She therefore sent them outside passengers by the stage coach, to an academy in Yorkshire, where she had stipulated that they should not come home in the holidays, and indeed not till their father arrived; for she was meditating a new tragedy, under the title of The Distrest Mother, or The Widowed Wife.

Though she did not appear to me very fond of her

husband, who was a plain good man, without any 'fine feelings,' and was displeased with her children, whose noise interrupted her studies, yet I took it for granted, that she, who spoke so feelingly of distress, of benevolence, of humanity, of charity, and who sympathized with the poor beetle that we tread upon, could not but be profusely beneficent to all her fellow-creatures in affliction who solicited her assistance; but I was here also greatly mistaken. A workman in stopping up her windows in consequence of the commutation tax, fell from a scaffold three stories high, and broke his leg. The passengers took him up, knocked at the door, and desired he might be admitted till a surgeon could be sent for; but I heard her as I passed by declaring, in a voice that might be heard from the stair-case on which she stood, quite to the end of the street—"He shall not be brought here. We shall have a great deal of trouble with him. Take him to the hospital immediately; and shut the door, d'ye hear, John." The passengers, lest time should be lost, hurried the poor man to a neighbouring public-house, where the honest landlord, with a pot of porter in his hand, and an unmeaning oath in his mouth, exclaimed, "Let him in?—Aye, and welcome.—Here, Tom, see him laid on my own bed, and let him have every thing necessary; and if he never pays me, it's no great matter.—Come, here's to his getting well soon—Poor man!—I warrant now he has a wife and family that must starve till he gets about again—but they shan't neither—I'll mention it to our club—They are all hearty ones, I know, and will subscribe handsomely."

The truth was, that the man had a wife and family, as my landlord conjectured, and is commonly the case. I heard that he was soon afterwards carried to Belinda with a petition, drawn up very pathetically,

by a person who never gave any thing himself, but the moving expressions. Belinda had given orders to the servants to say she was not at home if any body should call that week. For, indeed, she was exceedingly engaged in penning an elegy on the lap-dog who had died of a looseness; and had intended to finish her address to the Duchess on the hardships of the labouring poor.

I was satisfied with these inquiries, and began to lose my veneration for ladies and gentlemen of exquisite sensibility, of delicate feeling, and the most refined sentiment; believing firmly, that there is more good sense and true kindness in the plain motherly housewife, who is not above her domestic duties, and in the honest man of common sense, than in the generality of pretenders to more benevolent sensations, or 'finer feelings,' than belong to other people of equal age, rank, opulence, and education.

Evening LVI.

On some Effects of a regular University Education.

SIR,

I write to lay before you an evil which, I believe, has not been publicly noticed, though I have every reason to think I am not singular in suffering it.

I am a man of patrimonial estate, and, living in the seat of my ancestors, have always supported a respectable rank in the neighbouring country. Neither my forefathers nor myself ever aspired to the characters of fine gentlemen, but we have been long esteemed as honest, English country esquires, and company for the first families in the vicinity.

As I had an only son, I felt an ambition to improve the race by giving him a better education than ever fell to the lot of any of the family. I therefore resolved, after he had passed through the grammar school in the next town, to send him to Oxford. I knew nothing of the university; but by all accounts I concluded it was a wonderful place for improving young men in learning, and all gentleman-like and scholar-like qualifications. I considered it as a market, where every thing that was good and right was to be purchased, if money was not wanting, and if pains were bestowed to bring it away. I had formed such notions of the place, that I almost conceived Greek, and Latin, and all sorts of sciences and accomplishments, to be growing there as plentifully as wheat and turnips in some of my best inclosures.

Jack had been a rare boy at school, took his learning amazingly, and got the good word of his master, and every body who had any concern with him. He

was modest, good-natured, and dutiful. It did me good to see his honest ruddy countenance. He would blush, when the vicar examined him, like a young lady; though I found he always gave the right answers to the questions put to him by the learned doctor.

His master assured me, that at the age of eighteen he was fit for the university; and therefore I removed him from a place where he was making daily improvement, and where his morals were in perfect safety, to settle him at the celebrated seat of the Muses. I determined to convoy him myself to Oxford. In the post-coach from London, we were accompanied by two smart young men, with high capes, nankin trowsers, and short sticks. They eyed me with contempt, and my boy with an appearance of affected pity. I said but little, and poor Jack, who had not been used to the company of such 'knowing' young men, still less. Our fellow-travellers evidently did not like us at all; and therefore at Hounslow they mounted the coach-box and assumed the reins. We gave ourselves no concern, as they seemed to drive as well as if they had been always used to it; and we heard no more of them, till they met some of their acquaintance at Benson. After a mutual 'tally-ho!' at meeting, one of the horsemen asked our academical drivers, why they did not get into the coach, as it was going to rain; to which a voice from the box exclaimed with an oath—"We had rather be wet to the skin than ride with two such d—d quizzical* rascals, an old curmudgeon, and a young cub going to be entered at College."

I smiled: but Jack looked grave, and did not seem to relish the contemptuous appellation. He looked at his clothes, stroked his long lank hair, viewed me

* Vide Scoundrel's Dictionary.

from top to toe, and sidled away from me; forming, if I read him right, resolutions not to be long subject to the sneers of two such fine spirited fellows. I told him, that if these were members of the university, which I doubted, they must be low, vulgar fellows, and not worthy our regard: but here he replied, I must be mistaken, as one of them had been accosted as he came along with the title of a Baronet, and the other of a Lord. I answered, that these were probably nick-names, which their vulgarities had acquired them; but I found, upon inquiry at the inn, that Jack's observation was not erroneous.

On our entrance into Oxford we were wonderfully struck with the sight of the handsome buildings, and the appearance of young men in square caps, with pig-tails, leather breeches, and shoestrings, strutting about with gowns on their backs, like that of our good old vicar. Jack was awestruck, and scarcely uttered a syllable except in admiration; but we were both smoked as quizzes as we passed the coffee-house in the High-street.

I entered him at a college recommended by the vicar; and after leaving a good deal of money, and a great deal more advice, returned, not without some anxiety, to the old quiet mansion at the Mote.

I had desired Jack to keep up a constant correspondence with me. His first letters were very respectful, very correct, and very sensible. I was delighted with them. The Vicar and I chuckled over them as we smoked our pipes, and drank success to the young Oxonian. But my joy was soon abated, when, in a short time, instead of long, dutiful, and affectionate letters, I received about once a month, a scrawl, scarcely legible, complaining that his allowance was insufficient to support the appearance of a

gentleman, and insisting, in terms rather peremptory than suppliant, on an immediate augmentation. I complied with his request, for my affection for him was great; but not without a gentle rebuke, which was suggested rather by prudence than resentment. My rebuke, however, gentle as it was, destroyed the effect of my compliance. A very saucy letter was the consequence, in which I was almost set at defiance.

I was grieved, and at first inclined to give vent to my uneasiness by an angry reprimand; but, reflecting on the infirmities of youth, resolved hereafter to convince him of his error by argument, and to overcome him by kindness. I therefore gratified his wishes, dropped the subject of pecuniary supplies, and in my next letter expressed, what indeed I felt, an earnest desire to enjoy his company at the commencement of the long vacation.

He came, after spending a week by the way at the Hummums in Covent-Garden; and greatly was I surprised at his appearance. He was entirely changed in his external figure. He had lost the complexion of health; and his dress was in the style of a jockey, with a belt round his loins, and a leathern cap on his head. Unwilling to offend him, I kept my emotions of wonder to myself, and ran out to meet him, with as much glee as the father in the Gospel to embrace the prodigal son. His salutation was free and manly enough; but I expected something of his former tenderness. I thought, however, I might be wrong in wishing him to retain the behaviour of a boy; and therefore took all in good part; but he had scarcely sat down in my parlour before he began to find fault with the cut and colour of my coat, and to express his astonishment that I could wear such a 'quizzical' peruke. I laughed; but he gave the subject a seri-

ous turn; and vowed that such queer ways as I had, disgraced the family, and made him ashamed of himself among his brother Oxonians.

It was now time to assume something of the authority of the father. I spoke in a tone of displeasure. My gentleman rose in haste, banged the door, took his horse, and went away, as I afterwards learned, to visit a fellow collegian who had invited him to spend the vacation at his father's near Newmarket. In a few days, being in want of money, he sent an awkward apology; and in the tenderness of parental indulgence, I once more freely gave and forgave.

He has now proceeded in a similar mode of behaviour during five or six years. My forbearance alone has prevented a final rupture. His provocations have been singularly great during the whole time; but in the last vacation, they exceeded all the preceding, in offensive expressions of disrespect and disobedience.

His contempt for me and his mother is at length open and undisguised. Nothing we say or do is right; because it is not conformable to the principles and practices of his gay companions at college. My house, my furniture, my garden, my carriage, are all 'quizzical'. It was but the other day that he told me, he absolutely could not put up with me, if he did not make allowances for my not having had an university education. He corrects my speech, finds fault with the style and language of my letters, tells me I am unfit for the company of gentlemen, and that his mother is no better than a cook-maid in her Sunday clothes. He laments that, in consequence of our defects, he cannot see such company as he approves, at home.

Yet he frequently invites visitors from his college, to whom my stables and my cellars are open for use,

To the Reverend Jerome Hunter, D.D. Vice —— of —— College.

DEAR SIR,

I AM sensible an apology is necessary for my great neglect in not duly attending, as you desired me, and as I faithfully promised, last Saturday's fox-hunt at Shotover-hill. But your goodness will pardon my omission when I inform you of the cause. Poor Sukey, my best mare, was taken on Friday night with a most violent scouring. I nursed her myself, administered the medicines, and never quitted her a moment all night; having often been taught by you, how imprudent and dangerous it is to trust a favourite horse, during illness, to the management of a mercenary and ignorant groom. She is now better, and it is my steadfast resolution never more to be guilty of similar omission. I hope the rump and dozen which I fairly lost in the last bet I made with you in the Pig-market*, proved good. You have often told me they dress dinners admirably at Woodstock.

The old dog (be not alarmed, I do not mean the pointer, but my father) has got a church-yard cough. He is very savage, as usual; but when the rents come in at Michaelmas, I make no doubt of making him come down handsomely; after which I shall immediately go to Oxford, and keep the term, as I must do my exercises for my degree; and as the hunting season will be coming on apace. You promised me to get some strings of arguments to put into my cap. I believe you may get a cap full for a shilling, of Dick the bed-maker. The six 'wall lec-

* A passage leading to the Divinity-school.

tures' that you wrapt up your shoes in for your last journey, will be very convenient to me. I shall not want any declamations, as I have bought a couple of our college barber for sixpence.

Apropos.—I have made great inquiry, as you instructed me, after the best saddler in London. I believe I have found one, who makes saddles on geometrical principles. He charges only one guinea over the common price; and therefore I have bespoke three. The cheap stirrups that you recommended so strongly when, a few years ago, you examined me for my degree in the public schools, he says, are plated at Birmingham, and not so good as the London make. The spurs are in the same predicament. So I ordered him to procure the best, and I sincerely hope what I have done will receive your approbation, for which I am, as I ought to be, very anxious. By the way, the saddler above mentioned is a devilish good 'tick*.' He never said a syllable about the rhino. I shall take with me two or three 'knowing' sticks.

The guns, the powder, and the patent shot, shall go down by the waggon; and if they should arrive before me, pray put the powder into my writing-desk, and the guns and shot on any of the shelves in my study; but do not misplace the purging powders for the dogs.

The horse I bought of our Dean proved unsound; but I have had him made up, and when he is nicked and well peppered, I do not fear of making ten or twenty guineas clear profit upon him at Tattersall's. The instructions you gave me, for which I have incurred an eternal debt of gratitude, enable me often to deal in horse-flesh with considerable advantage.

Apropos again.—Will you part with your bitch

* Vide the St. Giles's Vocabulary, or Oxford Interpreter.

terrier, which used to sit with you on the table at the coffee-house? I will give you five guineas for her. Or as cash runs rather short, I had rather you should take the Paris edition of Olivet's Cicero. You will find the first volume on the shelf, with some soap upon it, near the wash-hand bason, in my coal-hole; some of the others under three or four garden-pots of geraniums and myrtles in the window; and the last in my dressing-closet, under the powder-box, with my bands in it. The volumes are a little stained with port, but the backs are good. My father bought them for me at Prince's. I told him it was extravagance, and that I should have no occasion for them; but the old fool would have his way.

Pray order in, against I come down, my usual stock of wine. You need not pay for it, as my landlord is a good 'tick.'

I had almost forgot to mention, that I went, as you desired me, to see the sermons that are printed like written hand. I think they will answer your purpose, and at a venture, I intend to bring down three dozen, of which you will do me the favour to accept.

I am quite tired of the vacation. My father, poor man! is such a boor, and my mother, you know, is not fit for genteel company. So you may imagine what a life I lead between them. But I seldom see either of them—I have separate apartments—separate cellar, stables, and dog-kennel. We shall have better times perhaps at Frankley-hall, before long, if this cough continues. Then I shall hope to see you here, to whom I owe so many obligations.

I am, dear Sir,
Your obliged pupil,
And humble servant,
J. H.

P. S. How many more lessons shall you give Sancho, before you pronounce him completely broken in?

To Henry Spendall, Esq. Fellow of —— College.

DEAR HARRY,

I GIVE you joy, my boy. The incumbent that kept you so long out of the living your father bought for you, has tipt off, I hear. Now for the 'japanning;' you must be 'externally' as black as the devil while you are receiving your commission.

The living is in a fine sporting county, however. Two or three packs of fox-hounds in the neighbourhood. I have a good mind to be a candidate for your curacy.

You intend, in due time, to take your doctor of divinity's degree, you tell me; because you have some interest in the borough, and are promised the first prebendal stall, and are determined to support your rank with dignity. As I can answer for it you never wrote a syllable against church or state, and scarcely ever read any thing but the Sporting Calendar, you will find no difficulty in obtaining that high academical honour. Nobody can accuse you of unitarianism, arianism, or any other *ism* but epicurism, puppyism, and jockeyism, so you will have your degree hollow. It is a done thing. You have no heterodox notions, not you. Perfectly orthodox in your veneration for pot, bottle, and gun. I intend, however, to make you a present previously to your taking your doctor's degree. It is my grandmother's bible. I would sooner warrant, than I

would warrant the soundness of the last horse you sold, that you never possessed one before, and never looked into one in your life. We are birds of a feather for that matter.

I have serious thoughts of proceeding in the divinity line myself. My father has the advowson of our parish church; a good three hundred a year. Not to be despised, my boy, in these hard times. It will keep the pack, with good management. I take my master's degree soon, and intend to be doctored in due time. Dr. Hunter, my tutor, has given me an old Latin sermon that I am sure will do for the exercise, because it has done already a dozen times at least, and is almost worn out in the service. *Probatum est.* I send it inclosed for your use, as you will want it first. Get the head boy at the grammar-school to read it over to you three or four times, that you may avoid false quantities, before you sport it at St. Mary's. If you want any strings of syllogisms, or divinity arguments, you will find a large bundle in my shoe-hole.

We are both, I am sure, well qualified to be doctors; that is, cow-doctors, sow-doctors, and horse-doctors, for we have made farriery the study of our lives; and many that have been bedoctored before us, never made any thing half so useful their study.

My old boy here is very troublesome. If he thought I was a student in divinity, I believe I should win his heart, for he loves the church as well as he does his money.

I keep him under, and seldom let him come into my apartment; for there is no bearing with such an illiterate old blockhead. It is my misfortune to be disgraced by my family.

I hope to give you the meeting next term at Oxford. I have therefore parted with all my books

to pay off a tick that Square-toes struck with the bookseller; but I have got a new stud, such as will delight your eyes. As soon as I have taken my degree, I intend to sport racers at Newmarket. I have got a good deal of preparatory knowledge from Doctor Hunter, who is a very good kind of fellow, I assure you. He accompanies me every where. I pay the piper; but he furnishes knowledge.

I would invite you to spend a few weeks here, as we have plenty of game; but I really am ashamed of my father and mother. More of this when I see you. Let me know by the next opportunity where you bought your neat boots.

Yours faithfully,
J. H.

Poor Jack has lost his father since these letters were written, and finding the estate not so large as he imagined, and himself greatly in debt, he begins to reflect seriously on the folly of his conduct. He talked to the old vicar on the subject very rationally; and declared that he owed his misfortunes and misconduct to the fear of ridicule and contempt, in a place of education, where literary ambition, with which he glowed at first entering it, had little or no encouragement; where false spirit, extravagance, horsejockeyship, and all its concomitants, were sure of gaining notice and esteem; where time was not sufficiently filled up by laudable employments; where forms occupied the place of substance; where to be 'knowing' in the amusements of gay life, was the sort of knowledge most prized; and where a degree of pride and insolence is assumed with the cap and

gown*, which teaches a freedom from what are falsely called prejudices, and a 'contempt for parents,' however respectable, if they are not distinguished by fashionable folly, modern refinements, the tricks of gamesters, and the cant language of buffoons, whose wit is merely animal vivacity.

* Hoc nobis PILEA donant. PERSIUS.

Evening LVII.

On the Necessity of dignifying public Officers and Magistrates by personal Merit and a corresponding Appearance.

The condition of human nature is so frail, that it is almost ridiculous in any man to exhibit the appearance of grandeur and dignity. But there are persons who seem to possess a native weight of character which adds to their words authority, and to their actions force.

This endowment, whatever it is, was intended by Providence for the communication of good and the prevention of evil. Those who possess it seem to have a natural claim to command, to civil pre-eminence, to the honourable and important offices of the magistrate and the legislator.

But in the confusion of the present scene, riches usurp the authority which nature intended for her favourites; and it is common to observe persons invested with civil and official importance, whose natural insignificancy exposes their persons to contempt, and renders their offices ineffectual. A Lord Mayor of London, for instance, raised from a low origin by fortunate events in trade, destitute of education and natural dignity, degrades at once the office and himself by the advancement of which he was ambitious. He grows more conspicuous by elevation; and the meanness which would pass unnoticed, or might even be palliated, in his natural station, becomes, when he is invested with the gold chain and the scarlet robe, a solemn mockery of magistracy.

Much of the contumacy of the common people has, I think, arisen from the want of personal authority in the magistrates. In ignorant ages the mere robes and insignia of office might command respect; but in times when, if few are profoundly, yet all are superficially learned, much more is required to secure a voluntary deference than the exaction of it by force, or the inviting of it by ostentation.

To secure respect, a mind must be visible; a mind furnished with knowledge and enlarged with liberality. Without disinterestedness no public character, however remarkably distinguished by talents, natural or acquired, can be long illustrious. Opinion or esteem is the foundation of authority; but how is opinion or esteem to be conciliated in favour of a man, who has bought his nominal honours, and knows not to act, to speak, or to think, consistently with the elevated place to which his vanity has aspired?

If vanity did not usually close the ear to the voice of advice, I would venture to whisper to every candidate for public honours, that he will probably derive no real credit from them, if he is conscious that he has not enjoyed the benefit of a liberal education. In private life, he may be very respectable as an honest man, and a good master of a family; but in public, he must be contemptible, without an elevation of sentiment corresponding with the elevation of his rank. I own that in some instances this elevation is visible where education has been defective. Strong parts and a long commerce with the world have supplied the defect; but these instances are not so common as to justify the generality of uneducated rich men in supposing that they are furnished by nature with talents, knowledge, and authority sufficient to qualify them for rule, for offices of public

dignity and national importance. Genius has no peculiar claims either at the Royal Exchange or the Heralds' Office.

These reflections were suggested by the following letter:

SIR,

I am a foreigner, and have spent a year or two in England, solely for the purpose of improving myself in a nation which is respected throughout Europe, as exhibiting a state of improvement, and a generosity of sentiment, which reflect honour on human nature.

When I came to London, I was ambitious of being introduced to the acquaintance of those who, I was told, were the principal magistrates; one of whom annually resided in the magnificent mansion of magistracy, and rode, as I often saw, with triumphal pomp in a gilded vehicle, through the streets of London. I found it by no means difficult to be introduced to a public feast, where I endeavoured to form an intimacy with the chief magistrate. I succeeded so far as to be invited to a private dinner with him, and a few of his brother aldermen, and members of the common-council.

The entertainment was sumptuous and genteel. But conversation was my object, and I spared no pains to lead to such subjects as I thought might afford me the most valuable information. I mentioned several of those topics connected with English history, in which I had read that the city of London had a principal share; but my remarks caused only a vacant stare, and received no other reply than such as—"I do not know, Sir,—I really forget,

Sir.—Give me leave to help you to a slice of ham, Sir."—I thought my conversation might be ill-timed, and therefore said no more on the subject of history, but joined in the general topics of the day. Pardon me, Sir, but I could not help blushing for two or three gentlemen in gold chains, who expressed themselves ungrammatically and vulgarly on the commonest subjects. I am a foreigner, and therefore must not pretend to be a critic in your language and pronunciation; but I appeal to you whether—'Them there things'—'This here weal,' 'My vife'—are reconcileable either to grammar or the elegance of polite conversation.

I ought not to be censorious, nor am I disposed to deride: but I cannot help observing, that the magistrates appeared, from the general turn of conversation, to be far less well informed and less liberally minded than their stations require. If the merchants and gentlemen of the metropolis are not better accomplished than the magistrates of my acquaintance, I own I shall lose something of that respect for your nation which I entertained while I was at home.

I intend to write my travels; and if I were to give an accurate account of those of your principal persons in the corporation of London with whom I have associated, I fear I should affront a people to whom I owe gratitude. The dignified magistrates of the first city in the universe would appear to be on a level with our vulgar. I dare say, and indeed am well informed, that there are members of the court who are polite and well-informed gentlemen; but that too often pragmatical persons offer themselves for the scarlet robe, who ought to be contented with the leathern apron. I endeavour to view

things as a philosopher and cosmopolite, and I cannot but think that the degradation of the magistracy must be injurious to the police, the morals, and the liberty of your country. Pardon my freedom, and believe me

Yours, &c.

A Swiss.

Evening LVIII.

On saying Grace at Table.

Reverentia mensæ. Juv.

SIR,

I am an old man, and have resided in a village above a hundred miles from London during the last forty years; but I was lately tempted, partly by curiosity and partly by business, to spend a month at Christmas with an old friend at the west end of the town. I was very much pleased with many improvements which I observed, and as I am not morose, I think I was not inclined to be querulous at any thing without cause. But there is one thing which gave me much offence, and I dare say you will allow it to be unjustifiable. I observed that the good old practice of begging a blessing on the refreshment of a dinner, and returning thanks for it to Him who is the author and giver of all good, was become unfashionable.

I have been laughed at more than once at some very elegant tables to which my friend introduced me, for standing up and expecting the master to say grace both before and after meat. I found it impossible to continue the practice at another man's house, with a whole circle around ready to stare with surprise, or laugh with scorn. I was therefore contented with a silent ejaculation; but though I conformed outwardly to the canons of fashion, I entered a secret protest against them, and beg leave through your means to make my protest public.

Give me leave to inform those polite gentlefolk, who have dropped the practice with an idea of its

being superstitious, vulgar, puritanical, that a consecration of the table was observed religiously by the politest nations of antiquity.

The ancient Greeks esteemed the table *Hieron Chrema*, or a sacred thing; and Cleodemus, in Plutarch, calls it the *Altar of Friendship and Hospitality.*

They made the first offering to the gods, and called them *απαρχαι*, or first fruits; and at the conclusion of the feast, they poured out, to the gods again, *σπονδαι* or *λοιβαι*, libations of wine.

They were unwilling to partake of the meal till a part of the provision had been offered to the gods, in order to sanctify the whole. Even Achilles, whose impetuous spirit was not prone to the weakness of superstition, would not eat when the ambassadors of Agamemnon disturbed him at midnight, till he had ordered his friend to make the oblation.

Θεοισι δε θυσαι ανωγει
Πατροκλον ω ἰτειρον, ὁ δ' εν πυρι βαλλε θυηλας.

Ulysses also, as Dr. Potter observes from Athenæus, when in the den of Polyphemus, did not neglect this duty of pious gratitude.

Ενθαδε πυρ καιοντες εθυσαμεν, ηδε και αυτοι
Τυρων αιτυμενοι φαγομεν.

Dr. Potter adds, that "in the entertainments of Plato * and Xenophon we find oblations made; and, to forbear the mention of more examples, the neglect

* *Μετα γαρ το δειπνησαι σπενδε τι φησιν πασιν και* TON ΘΕΟΝ *παιανισαντα και τιμιζοι μιναγισαντι.* Athenæus, lib. 4. Casaub. pag. 179. See Bishop Butler's Charge subjoined to his Analogy; and the authors referred to by him. Cudworth on the Lord's Supper, p. 8. Casaubon in Athenæum, lib. i. p. 11. Duport, Prælect. in Theophrastum, ed. Needham, cap. 9. p. 335.

of this duty was accounted a very great impiety, which none but Epicurus, and those who worshiped no gods at all, would be guilty of," *apud Epicurum ἐ σπονδὴ, οὐδ' ἀπαρχα τοις θεοις.*

I do not see any reason why those who, like Epicurus, refuse to honour God according to the dictates of natural gratitude, and the universal practice of the 'polished' people of the world, should not be numbered among the disciples of Epicurus, and, without any violation of charity, be supposed to say in their hearts, There is no God.

I could produce a great number of examples from the classics, to prove that the dinner was seldom enjoyed without some mode of consecration, even among those heathens to whom we are inclined to consider ourselves as greatly superior. And shall those who call themselves Christians neglect this instance of piety? especially as Jesus Christ has given many examples of it in the Gospel, and the people to whom it pleased God peculiarly to reveal himself, practised it from the earliest antiquity. I mentioned the practice of the 'polite' heathens in the first place, because I imagined this example would have the most weight with those who chiefly value themselves on 'politeness,' of which they sometimes consider the neglect of the 'graces' at table, as an honourable testimony. But I will now add some examples from the practice of the ancient Jews, which, in this particular, have as much 'politeness' in them as those of the Greeks and Romans, and ought to have much greater authority in a Christian country.

The master of the family among the Jews* pronounced, as soon as the guests or the family were seated, a general admonition to prayers, and then

* Vide Stuckii *Antiquitates Conviv.*

proceeded to the consecration of the dinner. The whole company sung a hymn, which is extant in a book entitled The Order of the Blessings and Psalms, and the master then said the following grace: "Blessed be the Lord our God, the King of the universe, who feedeth the world by his goodness, and by his grace and mercy giveth nourishment to all flesh; by whose bounty it cometh to pass that food never yet hath failed, neither will fail, his creatures. It is he alone who giveth existence to all things, and preserveth them, and doth good to all, and giveth food to every being that he hath created. Blessed be thou, O Lord, who feedest all things."

He then consecrated the wine and bread in a form similar to the preceding. This longer process was, however, only observed at formal dinners, and on solemn occasions, a shorter being used on common days: and it is recorded that the master of the house said grace before meat, and one of the guests returned thanks. Perhaps it would be too great a refinement to suppose that the business of returning thanks for a dinner supplied at his expense, was declined by the master from motives of delicacy. Sometimes, however, the master returned thanks, and the company made a response. The master said, "Let us return thanks to God because we have eaten of the creatures which belonged to him;" and the guests responded immediately, "Let God be praised, of whose blessings we have eaten, and by whose bounty we live."

The primitive Christians, imitating the example of the Jews, and more particularly of our Saviour, were strict in the performance of those pious duties which consecrated the table, and in returning thanks to God for the daily supply of necessary sustenance. Chrysostom frequently mentions the benediction of

the table made use of by the Monks in Egypt. In the *Horologium* of the Greek church, the whole form of the benediction is thus described.

Before the dinner is placed upon the table, the hundred and forty-fifth psalm is read aloud, and it no sooner is served up, than the priest repeats, "O Christ, our God, bless our meat and drink; for thou art holy now and for evermore; Amen." And after having tasted it, they all rise up and say, "Blessed art thou, O God, who pitiest us and feedest us from our youth; thou who givest food to all flesh, fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that, being always satisfied, we may abound in every good work, in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom, to thee, be glory, honour, power, and worship, together with the Holy Ghost. Amen." After dinner, the following is the form of thanksgiving: "Glory to thee, thou holy one, Glory to thee, O King; since thou hast given us food to our comfort and joy, fill us also with the Holy Ghost, that we may be found acceptable in thy sight, and not ashamed when thou shalt render to every one according to his works." Then the hundred and twenty-second psalm is read; after which—"As thou wast present in the midst of thy disciples while at supper, O thou Saviour, giving them peace, so come also to us and save us." Then follows a part of the twenty-second psalm, beginning at "The poor shall eat and be filled, they shall praise the Lord who seek him." *Kyrie Eleison*, Lord have mercy upon us. The whole concludes with this little prayer: "Blessed be God, who hath pitied and fed us with his rich gifts; may we enjoy his grace and loving kindness now and for evermore. Amen."

I imagine that the whole of this long grace was only used on extraordinary occasions; but there is no doubt but a part of it constituted the daily for-

mulary of consecration before meals, and of gratitude after them.

Far be it from me to recommend a prolixity approaching to that of the Greek church, or to that of the college graces, as established by our pious ancestors, who, according to the complaints of the hungry scholars, used to insist on long graces, and at the same time give but short commons. I think long prayers on such occasions particularly unseasonable. But I have produced these examples to show that the table has been considered by all people, from the earliest ages, as '*a sacred thing*,' and that they have ever thought it expedient to sanctify a meal by a previous consecration of the food, and a subsequent act of thanksgiving for the refreshment received. I infer, from the antiquity and universality of the practice, its propriety. It could not, I think, have been so ancient and almost universal, unless it had been also right and reasonable.

That it is right and reasonable, I believe many of those who neglect it will not seriously deny. But profligate men of fashion have set the example of omission, and they who are determined to follow the fashion in all its follies, think themselves obliged to omit a duty both easy and useful. They ought not, they allow, to suffer fashion to supersede duty and decency: but they assert, that, such is the power of this arbitrary tyrant, they 'cannot what they ought.' A bad excuse indeed, and such an one as will scarcely be accepted for an omission injurious to themselves, to their children, their servants, their neighbourhood, and to the cause of religion.

There is indeed something so brutally thoughtless and ungrateful in partaking of plenty and pleasure, in faring sumptuously every day, without feeling, or at least expressing, gratitude to the Giver of all good

gifts, that one would wonder how persons pretending to elegance and sentimental refinement can possibly pardon themselves the impious omission. Indeed, however genteel they may appear, and however elegant their fashionable manners; yet while they sit down daily to their meals, like brutes that perish, they must be numbered among Horace's *Epicuri de grege porcos*, hogs of Epicurus's sty; and instead of soup in a China terrene, it would be a proper reproof to serve them up offal in a wooden trough.

Yours, &c.

A RATIONAL FORMALIST.

EVENING LIX.

On injuring the Health in Attempts to improve Beauty.

SIR,

UNDER a feigned name, or without a name, I can venture to divulge some errors and misfortunes which I should not choose to acknowledge in my own person, lest my friends should deride me.

From the information of my looking-glass, and the praises of my friends, I was led to conclude at a very early age that I was beautiful. As it is natural to pay the first attention to that on which we chiefly value ourselves, I devoted much time and care to the contemplation and improvement of my face. The smallest pimple or redness gave me great uneasiness; but there was one blemish which almost broke my heart. One of my fore teeth grew irregularly, and had at one corner the appearance of decay. This alone I imagined sufficient to counterbalance the effect of all my other graces. But as I read the pretensions of dentists in their advertisements, my mortification did not yet terminate in despair.

I applied to an operator, who confidently assured me that he could replace my tooth, by an art known only to himself, in such a position as to render my rows of ivory and pearls, as he was pleased to call them, perfectly unparalleled. I submitted to his hand, and he twisted a wire round my teeth, which for six weeks gave me exquisite torment; but the hope of removing the blemish afforded me solace under it. The pain, and the peculiar diet which I was ordered to pursue, brought on a fever which killed all the roses in my cheeks, and had nearly killed me. The wires

were taken out, and my tooth remained nearly in the same situation.

As I had suffered so much in attempting to do violence to nature, I resolved to submit to her in future with patience; but the little appearance of decay, which I have hinted at before, became a black spot, and prognosticated, as the doctor said, an approaching *caries*. This was terrifying indeed! Any thing on earth was tolerable in comparison with a *caries*. Nay, I know not whether, in the agonies of my mind on the apprehensions of it, I should not have submitted cheerfully to death, rather than have lived with a black speck on a front tooth. But hope once more shone upon my bosom. A kind dentist restored my spirits, by declaring that he was possessed of an art which would prevent all bad consequences, and continue the beauty of my pearly ornaments, set between rubies (for so he expressed himself), unsullied during life.

The remedy was '*transplantation*.' I submitted to extraction with a stoical heroism. A chimney sweeper, who attended at my side, parted with his best tooth for a shilling, and it was planted reeking with blood and warm with life, in the socket whence my odious tooth with the black speck had been just drawn. I was now in a state of exultation. I thought my gums might defy old age and decay, and gloried in the idea of having almost found out the art of rejuvenescence. My triumph was but transient. A tumour and inflammation ensued. The pain I suffered is not to be described; but I was still a heroine, animated with the idea that the pain was but for a short time, and that the happiness would be for life.

I became so ill as to be under the necessity of seeking medical advice. Shame prevented me from informing my physician of the cause of my illness. He

was at a loss to account for it; but from the appearance was induced to prescribe large doses of mercury. The disease still continued, and I lost several of my teeth and a great part of my gums and palate. My lips were distorted, or corroded, in a frightful manner. The physician at last insisted on the necessity of my undergoing what he called a salivation. He said my life depended upon it. I submitted, and preserved my existence; but how shall I describe what I felt on looking into the glass! Every appearance of old age and deformity. I will leave to your imagination the ideas of horror and grief which tormented my heart; I gave up all pretensions to beauty, as indeed I well might; for my countenance was the picture of every thing disgustful. Think of paleness tinged with a livid yellow, a shrivelled skin, distorted lips, and toothless gums.

I find upon inquiry, that the person whose tooth had been placed in my gums, was labouring under a complication of the filthiest of diseases, and that the tooth inoculated them all on me. I have heard that I am not the only victim to such follies and unnatural practices. I understand the transplanting of teeth is dangerous, even when the person from whom it is taken is healthy; but is it likely that a healthy and temperate person would part with his teeth for money? He who can submit to this, must be an abject wretch, and one whose veracity, if he declares himself healthy, can never be safely relied on.

That my life is spared, is a mercy scarcely deserved. I hope to spend it in acquiring a more solid mind and judgement than I possessed, when, from the dictates of vanity, I suffered myself to consent to an unnatural violence, cruel to another, and most injurious to myself. It will contribute something to

atone for my folly, if, by communicating the consequences of it, I warn others from its imitation. Adieu.

SIR,

It pleased Providence to give me a strong constitution; and leading a life of perfect ease and plenty, I began, at the age of eighteen, to grow rather plump, not to say fat and corpulent. Shocking epithets those! and to avoid their being applied to me, I resolved to have recourse to such methods as I had heard were effectually used in reducing the body to a moderate size. I drank vinegar copiously and all acids that I could procure. I lived upon vegetable, scarcely tasting animal food. I laced so tightly, as to squeese myself into half my natural dimensions; and I sweated myself every day between two feather beds till I was ready to faint. These methods were not unsuccessful. I gradually shrunk to a 'lady all skin and bone.' I felt great complacency in success; but I was little acquainted with the consequences which were shortly to ensue. The state of debility to which I had reduced myself, soon brought on what the physicians called an 'atrophy.' And a most shocking figure I made. I looked in the glass with many a wishful sigh after my departed plumpness. I was obliged to call in a physician, who, discovering the cause of my disorder, recommended what is jocosely termed kitchen physic. He gradually led me from milk and eggs to roast beef, plum pudding, port, and ale. He says, I was at death's door, and indeed I believe it; for my face, in my looking-glass, looked just like a Death's head sculptured on a tomb-stone. I now laugh and grow fat; and, thank Heaven, am in a

fair way of recovering some share of that health which I foolishly destroyed. I hope my example will warn others from falling into similar dangers, who may not have strength of constitution sufficient to escape them. It is a secret that must go no further; but I am to be married next week to a gentleman of large fortune, and every other qualification requisite to make the state happy. If I had continued so thin and ghastly as I once was, I believe he would as soon have thought of marrying one of the skeletons in Surgeons' Hall. Adieu.

Another correspondent informs me that, having pimples in her face, she clandestinely purchased a quack medicine, which she took without advice and without judgement, till at last she brought on a disorder which had nearly proved fatal.

I have heard many complain of having caught colds, fevers, and a long train of dreadful diseases, by dressing in the fashion on first coming out after a long confinement in their bed-chamber.

Many also complain of nervous weaknesses, occasioned by an abstinence, such as hermits and anachorites hardly ever practised, an abstinence from such kinds and quantities of food as are really necessary to the support of nature, an abstinence proceeding from a desire to preserve their shape, and to perpetuate their youth and beauty, but which causes extreme debility and premature old age.

I wish young ladies to be duly sensible of the value of health as well as of beauty. Beauty indeed is scarcely compatible with ill health; but if it were, it really would be a bad exchange to give up health for

beauty. Under the languor of disease, and the torment of pain, many will one day lament that desire of improving their persons which led them in their youth to violate nature, and to weaken the foundation of the whole fabric, while they were endeavouring to decorate the front.

Evening LX.

On the Ill-usage to which the Instructors of Youth are sometimes exposed.

On croit sottement qu'il est plus honorable de conduire en qualité de capitaine, une troupe d'ouvriers, ou de paysans, qu'on nomme soldats, que de commander à de jeunes seigneurs, et de leur former le cœur et l'esprit. Caraccioli.

As nothing contributes more to the encouragement and increase of excellence in a profession than the honour bestowed upon it, and the esteem in which it is held by the world; it is an useful and laudable effort, which some benevolent writers have made, to raise employments of great importance to society, from the contempt into which they have unfortunately fallen.

Every one is ready to allow the importance of education; yet few entertain a due respect for the profession which is to administer it. The world is governed by names; and with the word Pedagogue has been ludicrously associated the idea of a pedant, a mere plodder, a petty tyrant, a gerund-grinder, and a bum-brusher.

But as the profession is not only in the very first degree useful to society, but attended with peculiar hardships and difficulties, it deserves the recompense and alleviation of public esteem.

The schoolmaster's employment has been compared to the punishment inflicted on the Danaides and on Sisyphus. His labour knows no end; for, supposing one set of scholars at one time to be attentive and to improve, yet they are succeeded soon

after by new scholars, and the whole work is to be recommenced.

He languishes over the repetition of rules and precepts *, which have nothing amusing to his fancy, or improving to his understanding. He goes his round like the mill-horse, and his ears ring with cases, declensions, genders, conjugations, *Propria quæ maribus; As in præsenti; hic, hæc, hoc;* and *di, do, dum.*

He is conversant with those who continue in his company unwillingly, and are impatient to be gone; with the petulant, the peevish, the idle, the inattentive, the ungrateful, and the refractory †.

He inhales dust and impure air, and his ears are seldom relieved from noise. His patience and temper are continually put to trial: he bears about him an instrument of torture, and is frequently obliged to inflict punishment with the reluctant severity of an executioner.

If he spare the rod, he must be often busied in reprimanding, admonishing, remonstrating, and advising those who hate him for his pains; and, if they can have no other revenge, delight in giving uneasiness, by teasing the temper of their best friend, their foster-father. Few occupations exercise the temper, or tend more to spoil it, than that of a conscientious schoolmaster.

He is liable to hourly insult and affronting behaviour from the senior boys, who resent with rancor

* "Quid injucundissimum in scholâ mihi visum sit, fatebor; illam eadem pensa retractandi, eosdemque vicies vel tricies scriptorum errores corrigendi necessitatem." GESNER.

† "Quam ingratus labor, totos dies versari inter pueros, inter invitos plerumque, et substrictis veluti auriculis, horam, quæ se carcere emittat, expectantes; inter petulantes, morosos, pigros, reluctantes disciplinæ!" GESNER.

rous virulence the exercise of that discipline on themselves, which they at the same time have sense enough to know is no more than the master's duty compels him to enforce.

He is exposed to continual misrepresentation. The tongue of every boy in his school, however silly or malicious, has a tale to tell concerning his supposed mistakes, his mismanagement, his severity, his partiality, his parsimony. Himself and his family are painted to the father and mother, and to all company, in the blackest colours which malice can invent, and inexperience conceive.

The master is blamed for the faults of nature. A boy is stupid or idle, and learns nothing. He is removed in wrath; the master loses his scholar and the emoluments attending him; but that is not sufficient, he loses something of his peace and his character: for the boy is removed by those 'who must allege some fault to justify the removal.' They cannot bear that an imputation should fall on the boy; and therefore the whole load of censure, aggravated with a thousand falsehoods, is laid on the master.

If he ventures to vindicate himself, he is under the necessity of throwing blame on the boy, which his generosity will often not permit; or if a regard to himself and justice compels him to speak, the offence already given is aggravated beyond all bounds, and both the boy and his friends become implacable enemies and bitter slanderers for life *.

These are only a few among the many evils which attend a profession highly useful, and even neces-

* "Illud in primis ægrè ferebam, si cum boni me viri officio functum esse putarem, expostulatum venirent mecum et questum injuriam ii, quorum me liberis optime consuluisse, mihi constaret." GESNER.

sary to the existence of society. It will be urged, that in some cases there are the alleviations of lucre; and it must be confessed that the world is not so bad as not to furnish many boys of a docile and amiable disposition, and many parents who are grateful and candid. But still there are few employments attended with more irksome labour, more liable to ill-usage, and less well rewarded by those whom it most essentially serves, than that of the schoolmaster.

In some cases it is said to be lucrative; but it should be remembered, that the lucre, when it is considerable, usually arises from the boarding and lodging of pupils in the master's house, and not from the business of instruction and the labour of a school. And where the pupils are lodged and boarded in the superintendant's house, his trouble is ten-fold greater, and the ill-usage to which he is exposed not to be described by language.

The caprice and ill-humour of many boys is such as never can be satisfied. As, on the one hand, they know little of the true nature of things, so, on the other, they are prone to judge of all they see with precipitancy. As they have not yet felt the ill-usage of the world, so they want that sort of sympathy for others which experience only can teach. They censure all who are concerned with them, and happen to displease them, without judgement and without mercy. They delight in doing mischief and injuries for diversion; and, consequently, the superintendant of a number of boys in his own house, has an office something like that of a keeper of a mad-house, a gaol, or a collection of wild beasts, but much more unthankful.

Yet ingenious and learned men sometimes submit to this task voluntarily. They certainly do, and upon the principle of choosing the least of two evils;

for it is better than to starve, and to involve a family in all the evils of indigence.

> Want is the scorn of every wealthy fool,
> And wit in rags is turn'd to ridicule. DRYDEN'S JUV.

Hard necessity forces them to submit to the yoke; and when their shoulders have become galled till they are callous, they bear it with a patient insensibility.

Yet if we take our ideas of the business of the instructor from a poet, what can be more pleasurable?

> Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
> To teach the young idea how to shoot,
> To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
> To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
> The generous purpose in the glowing breast;
> Oh speak the joy!—— THOMSON.

If there were no perverseness, obstinacy, ingratitude, and stupidity, the task, to a benevolent heart, might be delightful. There is something truly agreeable in assisting the efforts of a youthful mind which is at once ingenious and ingenuous. And certainly many virtues may be advantageously exercised in bearing with ill-usage, and doing good to those who hate and despise you *.

* The following sentiments of a schoolmaster are worthy of the most benevolent patriot and philosopher: "Jam vero parùm mihi non dicam generosus sed humanus videtur, cui non maximam voluptatem adferat ingens quæ in schola offertur, benè faciendi occasio. Ducuntur in scholas et fidei præceptorum committuntur parvi homines, rerum omnium imperiti et rudes, ad vitia omnia proclives. Quod majus præstari vel ipsis, vel parentibus ipsorum et cognatis, vel reipublicæ adeo, beneficium potest, quam si rudibus animis ea instillentur, unde pro stupidis, prudentes; pro mutis, infantibus certè, facundi; pro malitiosis

It is a fine opportunity of serving human nature and one's country, and I admire the philanthropy of those who, from so pure a motive, are influenced to undergo labours so severe, contumelies so insulting, slanders so unjust, ingratitude so base. I fear the number is small:

——vix sunt totidem quot
Thebarum portæ vel divitis ostia Nili. JUV.

The greater part submit to the labour with the common stimulus of human exertion, the hope of gain; and when it is considered that parents purchase not only ease and exemption from the toil of instruction and the trouble of their children's ill-humour, not only accomplishments useful and ornamental, but also food, accommodations, and habitation for their offspring, the gain of the masters should not be considered as earned too easily. If the masters acquit themselves well in an undertaking so arduous, they are justly entitled not only to profit but to honour.

If I should be asked, to what purpose are these observations on the ill-treatment of schoolmasters; I should answer, that they are intended to vindicate from contempt an order of men at once useful and oppressed; to induce parents to become more candid and considerate in their behaviour to them; and to persuade masters themselves, actuated by a due sense of their own value in society, to scorn that

et turpibus benefici fiant et honesti; pro impiis denique, Christiani? Si doctorum opera fiant boni viri, qui et suis superesse rebus, et præsidio esse suis familiis, et ornare rempublicam, pro captu quisque suo, possint? Equidem liquido confirmare possum hâc me vel solâ cogitatione, sæpe abstersisse, quæ offerebantur, molestias: satis compensatos labores judicasse meos, si vel ad unum alterumque ille fructus, quem modo dixi, perveniret." GESNER.

meanness, submission, and obsequiousness, which invites and almost justifies contempt.

It unfortunately happens that many masters, in a dependent state, exhibit a servility of manners which, while it flatters the weak parent, disgraces the didactic profession. 'Purse-proud parents are too apt to consider all whom they pay, as servants;' and to require an obsequiousness in the instructors of their children, incompatible with the spirit of a liberal man worthy to superintend a liberal education. They demand a slavish disposition in him, whom they wish to teach their children liberality both by precept and example. Men of sense and liberal minds cannot submit patiently. Others occupy their place, and succeed by adulation and by the mean arts of pleasing; and thus is the profession degraded, and education becomes, instead of a fine philosophical preparation for the conduct of life, a mere mechanical skill in writing, reading, spouting, casting accounts, dancing, fencing, and fiddling. And thus it must be, while masters attend more to pleasing the parent's vanity, submitting to his pride, and complying with his folly, than to serving the pupil in the rugged path of an honest discipline. The Doctor Rocks always had more patients than the Akensides, the Addingtons, the Heberdens, and the Pitcairnes. In no profession are there more arrant quacks than in the didactic.

Evening LXI.

On some Effects of long Separation in the married State.

I present my reader with the following letters, which describe a situation in private life.

My dear Husband,

I write not to upbraid you. I entertain a sincere affection for you, and no unkind usage shall ever remove it. I write only to let you know the state of those whom you have unfortunately abandoned, your children and your wife.

Fame has informed me, with too much authenticity, that you have found another object of your love, and that I shall see your face no more. I, who had expected your return from the East Indies with painful anxiety, who had counted the slow hours which parted you from me,—think how I was shocked at hearing you would visit England no more, and that you had settled with a mistress in the South of France. It was for your sake, as well as my own, that I lamented. You went against my earnest entreaties; but it was with a desire, which I thought sincere, to provide a genteel maintenance for our four little ones, whom you said you could not bear to see brought up to the evils of poverty. I might now lament the disappointment in not sharing the expected riches which I hear you have amassed. But I scorn it. What are riches compared to the delight of sincere affection! I deplore the loss of your love; I deplore the frailty which

has involved you in error, and will, I am sure, as such mistaken conduct must, terminate in misery.

But I mean not to remonstrate. It is, alas! too late. I only write to you to acquaint you with the health and some other circumstances of myself and those little ones whom you once loved.

The large house in which you left us in Harley-street could not be supported without an expense which the little sum you left behind could not long supply. I have relinquished it, and retired to a neat little cottage in a village fifty miles from London. We can make no pretensions to elegance; but we live in great neatness, and, by strict œconomy, supply our moderate wants with as much comfort as our desolate situation will allow. Your presence, my love, would make the little cottage a palace.

Poor Emily, who is grown a fine girl, has been working a pair of ruffles for you, and often, as she plies her needle, repeats with a sigh, When will my dear papa return? The others are constantly asking me the same question; and little Henry, as soon as he began to talk, learned to lisp, in the first syllables he ever uttered, When will papa come home?

Sweet fellow! He is now sitting on his stool by my side, and as he sees me drop a tear, asks me why I cry, for papa will come home soon. He and his two brothers are frequently riding on your walking-cane, and take particular delight in it because it is papa's.

I do assure you I never open my lips to them on the cause of your absence. But I cannot prevail with myself to bid them cease to ask when you will return, though the question frequently extorts a tear (which I hide in a smile), and wrings my soul, while I suffer in silence.

I have taught them to mention you with the

when you aspired to the affections of one who is deserving of a man of spirit, and ———

Yours no more.

Till I received this I never thought of your letter. Indeed, as I knew your hand, I never opened it; for it reached me when I was intoxicated with newly-acquired opulence, and a variety of vicious gratifications.

It has indeed afforded me satisfaction, as you kindly intended it, to find that my poor children have such a mother to compensate the injuries of a deluded father.

The wound inflicted by my antagonist, who is also a married man, is in a vital part; and there is not, as I have told you, the least hope of recovery. I can scarcely wish it, unless it were to repent of my transgressions; for I should be ashamed to see my injured Emilia, and the presence of the little ones would break my heart. I have had time to make a will; and the sum which I have left, though little in comparison with what I acquired abroad, will, I confide, under your care, supply a decent competency.

Forgive me, my dear wife, forgive me, my dear children, and remember that the father who cruelly deserted you, lived a wretch in consequence of his unkindness, and died prematurely. It was the last satisfaction he had, that he lived to see his error, and to ask God and his family forgiveness. Farewell; and may you and your dear children avoid the misery by avoiding the wickedness of your husband,

———.

The silent grief of the amiable Emilia can easily be conceived. But her own heart and her children consoled her. She had brought up her children virtuously, and furnished them with useful knowledge to the best of her power: and they repaid her by gratitude and good conduct. The addition to their very little fortune was opulence to those who had not expected it.

When time had mitigated her grief, I have often heard her in conversation lament the situations which cause married persons to separate at a great distance, and for a long time, which, in some minds, are apt to erase the traces of affection; and she has spoken with warmth against that avarice which drives people who have a competency, and might reasonably be contented at home, to foreign climes in pursuit of enormous wealth, which Providence, as a punishment for avarice, frequently renders the occasion of misery.

Evening LXII.

On confounding Religion with Superstition.

Horum enim sententiæ omnium non modo superstitionem tollunt, in qua inest Timor *inanis* Deorum; sed etiam Religionem, quæ Deorum pio cultu continetur.

Cic. De Nat. Deorum, lib. i. 42.

Such is the imperfection of language, that words cannot be found to discriminate all the variety of ideas of the human mind with that degree of precision which is necessary to avoid error. A great many mistakes in morals arise from the abuse of words, which are too often either voluntarily or malevolently misunderstood and misapplied. The Christian religion has always suffered by this perversion. It suffers at this time, since it is denominated by those who impiously endeavour to injure its cause, a mode of *Superstition*. Though man boasts much of his reason, it is really astonishing to consider how few exercise it with effect. Give any thing a bad name, and the majority of mankind will abominate it without examination, merely in consequence of the first impression which they hastily received from a misapplied appellation.

The freethinkers of this age, who dignify themselves with the name of liberal philosophers, hesitate not to stigmatize all religion with the name of superstition. They who wish to be esteemed men of liberal minds, and who abhor the ridicule and censure which attend the bigot, are but too ready to join with the pretended philosophers in exploding religion. To avoid the epithet of superstitious, which

conveys to them the idea of weakness, they are rash and precipitate enough to reject all the comfortable offers which religion reaches out to her sincere votaries. The very name frightens them; and if they resolve not to fear God, it is very certain that they are sadly afraid of man. They dare the vengeance of Omnipotence; but they cannot stand against the ridicule of a pert witling and the sarcasm of a minute philosopher.

He must know little of the history of mankind, who shall deny that superstition has prevailed in all ages and all nations, and caused much cruelty and misery. Man has a natural tendency to superstition. Feeling himself weak and miserable, he is ready to fly to any thing which his fancy suggests to him as a refuge in distress. A stock or a stone becomes the object of his adoration. He is ready to inflict on himself the most excruciating torments, or to suffer them from others, if he is once persuaded that he can thus appease an angry Deity. Natural affection dies at the command of superstition. A child is sacrificed with alacrity, if the devotee is taught, that with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Every thing yields to the devout phrensy. That every philanthropist should therefore endeavour to prevent its diffusion among mankind, is to be expected and applauded. But let him not, through carelessness or violence, root up a salutary plant in his endeavour to eradicate a weed. Religion is the medicine of human life, as Superstition is its bane.

In this enlightened age there is little danger of gross superstition. The darkness of ignorance was necessary to give to the bugbears of imagination the appearance of reality. Opinions are examined in this country with that freedom which our happy constitution allows, and that perspicacity which a mul-

titude of well-informed understandings must reasonably be supposed to possess. The national religion is therefore professed in all its native purity, and they who presume to call it superstition, only prove their own wickedness and vanity.

Such vanity must be wicked, though, at the same time, it owes much of its origin to folly. Weak men often seek nothing further than the applause of their company. They appear wonderfully wise in their own eyes, if they can astonish their neighbours by the singularity or the boldness of their opinions. Such men are to be known, whenever a religious idea is introduced, by a significant sneer of contempt, or an uplifting of the eye-brows with an air of conscious superiority. If the language of grimace is not sufficiently understood, they think it necessary to suggest a hint, "that they look upon all such superstitious stuff as unworthy men of sense," (by which they mean to characterize themselves,) "and fit only to scare children and old women. For their own parts, they must congratulate themselves that they are emancipated from the horrid slavery of prejudice."

Nevertheless it would appear, on a fair examination, that these arrogant talkers are only half learned, and that pride fills up the mighty void of sense; yet, such is the confidence with which they speak, that the young and the weak are often seduced by them, and become their disciples. Thus their sect is increased in numbers, and their arrogance increases in a much greater proportion.

They teach their disciples that religion owes its rise to subtle politicians, and its support to the arts of priestcraft. It is at once a melancholy and an undeniable truth, that religion has been hypocritically abused by statesmen and ecclesiastics to serve the

purposes of avarice and ambition. But will cavillers never desist from arguing against the use of a thing from its abuse, a fallacy unworthy a man of common understanding or common honesty? I reprobate those politicians and those priests who have attempted to avail themselves of religion as an artifice to promote their secular designs. They are more detestable than the open and declared unbeliever. If he is honest, he is an object of compassion rather than contempt: but those artful politicians, who think to drive men to slavery, or obedience as they call it, by frightening them with the phantoms of religion which they do not themselves believe, deserve the vengeance of society. It will be said, that they mean to preserve good order by promoting superstition. I cannot call that good order which is preserved only by the deceit and hypocrisy of the rulers. Good order requires that men capable of so mean deceit should not be the governing part of society. Their very pre-eminence disturbs good order. The only good order which they really wish to promote is, that tame acquiescence among the lower ranks, which allows themselves to lord it over a subject world.

It is very true that religion contributes to secure a peaceable acquiescence in good government. This is one among its many beneficent effects; but it is not true that religion is only the invention of politicians, and a mere state engine to effect tranquillity. It orginates in the human mind from the spontaneous feelings of nature. In the most unenlightened countries, where no pretensions were ever made to revelation, traces of it are to be found. Nothing but ignorance united with depravity can deny the foundations of natural religion. Every good mind admitting natural religion by the light of natural under-

standing, will rejoice to find so many proofs of the Christian revelation.

To fear God is the best method of acquiring that true courage which fears nothing else. The fear of God arises not from a timorous and weak mind, as the infidel pretenders to philosophy represent it. I appeal to facts in the history of mankind. Have not the bravest and best men in all ages and nations displayed a reverential awe of God? If only the weak had patronized religion, it would long ago have been exploded. The examples and arguments of the best and wisest of mankind have operated, under the direction of Providence, in continuing in the world, that source of all true comfort, a due sense of religion. The vain and the wicked have endeavoured to destroy it, and they have always succeeded with a few; but they have not been able to prevail universally; neither will they; for it is founded on the rock of truth, and the *gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

I am sorry to observe the philosophy of Epicurus gaining ground in our country. It might be called the philosophy of Satan. It is destructive of every thing virtuous and good, and equally portends the ruin of empires and of human nature. It flatters human depravity so much, that nothing can impede its progress but the counteracting prevalence of Christian principles and practices.

I therefore seriously exhort all who are Christians indeed, to dare to profess what they believe, and to discountenance error by the native fortitude of truth. The misfortune is, that the modest Christian is too often restrained by his love of peace, and by his humility, from standing up in the defence of the Gospel; while the patrons of error, incited by va-

nity, and a malignant desire of rendering others as wicked and miserable as themselves, are indefatigable in the diffusion of their opinions. It becomes the duty of the sincere Christian to exert himself, when unbelievers multiply, and when the scorner declares the Christian religion, like all other religions, to be only "*a mode of superstition.*"

On the Machiavellian principle of using religion as an engine of state, let me ask the pretended philosophers, how the most important transactions of civil life, and how the business of courts of judicature can proceed, when the doctrine shall be successfully diffused, that Christianity is but an artful delusion to enthrall the vulgar? Will an oath be then of any force or obligation? These philosophers are more injurious to the interests of society, than many malefactors who are by the laws of their country capitally convicted. They destroy the very root of all civil and moral virtue. They are teachers of vice, not of timid and reluctant vice, but of vice which dares the broadest day-light, and boldly defends itself on avowed principle.

I will conclude with adding one suggestion, which, though it may not find universal approbation, will, I think, deserve it. I am persuaded that a good man ought to be cautious of expressing himself with scorn and contempt even on the subject of those many false religions which prevail in the world, and which may justly deserve the name of superstition; for it appears to me, that God Almighty, as a benevolent being, must always be pleased with intentional service and obedience, though the mode of performing it should be erroneous. At least, I believe it will admit no doubt, that God will be better pleased with the zeal of the most superstitious, than with the impiety and presumption of the unbelieving philoso-

pher, who proudly imagines his own reason to be the standard of all truth and propriety.

These unhappy dupes of pride will, I dare say, at some future day, find their error refuted, if not by argument, yet by the slow punishments of an avenging God. For great and terrible is the Lord God omnipotent. Who may abide his wrath? "If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Blessed indeed are they who throughout life have served their God with devotion and humility. God shall make all their bed in their sickness. Life to them shall be pleasant, as a journey through a delightful country warmed and enlightened by the sun; and death shall be to them disarmed of his terrors; so that, both in life and at death, they shall experience the truth of that declaration, which teaches us, that *the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.*

Evening LXIII.

On suffering the Judgement to be misled by Wit on religious Subjects.

To be remarkable for that lively and creative power of the mind which invents such ideas as are both pleasing and surprising, by their truth and novelty, is a distinction greatly to be valued. It is to possess a power of diffusing a charm on every subject, and of striking conviction in the mind with an instantaneous impulse. There is no doubt but that the Giver of every good gift intended that it should be productive of beneficial effects. It is certainly conducive to cheerfulness, and enlivens the dull identity of common life. It ridicules folly; and, by ridiculing, frequently corrects it. It often decides with momentary intuition on subjects of which plodding industry has laboured only to augment the obscurity. None, I believe, will indulge a general invective against wit, but those who are destitute of it.

Wit has sometimes been used as an auxiliary to reason in the defence of religion. Dr. South possessed a share of abilities which were sufficient to brandish any weapon which he chose to employ. Wit in his hand was sharp and irresistible, and made its way like the scymitar or the battle-axe. He was one of the ablest champions of the church. He is not only a wit but a solid reasoner. His learning is equal to his natural endowments. Wit enlivens the mass of his erudition, as the leaven leaveneth a farinaceous substance. Dr. South exerted his wit to so good purposes, and with so much effect, that

he is most deservedly placed in a high rank among the many excellent preachers who have adorned this country. Yet a sincere admirer of him cannot but wish that he had not deformed his writings with some expressions which, though not destitute of humour, must be condemned as vulgar and indecorous.

Dr. Horne, the Bishop of Norwich, who discovered a genuine spirit of piety in his writings, and displayed the beauty of holiness in all its charms, has attacked the philosophy of Hume with the arms of ridicule. Indeed many parts of Hume's philosophy appear to carry with them their own refutation by inherent absurdity; but they fall into the hands of those whose want of learning and of principles induces them to admit the arguments of sophistry in defence of libertinism. Dr. Horne justly supposed that the admirers of Hume were more likely to be disabused of their error by the fear of derision, than by any force of argumentation. He has indeed derided both Hume and the Humists, as they affect to style themselves, with singular success. I only wish that the part of his book in which they are attacked could be universally introduced to their notice. It would operate as an antidote to the poison of the sceptic, unless indeed its genuine effect should be prevented by the force of established prejudice.

The latter part of Dr. Horne's Letters upon Infidelity I should not have regretted if it had been entirely omitted. It owes its origin to an obscure pamphlet, which would never have emerged to notice by its own strength: and the difficulties of many passages in Scripture will never be removed, to the satisfaction of cavilling sceptics, by the most ingenious answers.

It must be owned, that great caution is required

in the use of wit and humour as auxiliary to the cause of religion. They induce a levity of mind, which is too apt to degenerate to a wanton disregard of every thing serious. Religion, like a chaste matron, should appear in a dress which excites sentiments of respect, and forbids familiarity. When she is introduced to mankind in a grotesque or gay attire, she ought to be under the direction of a guide who can teach her to preserve an air of dignity in the midst of her condescension: I mean to suggest that wit and humour should never be used in religious treatises but by writers whose judgement, like that of Dr. Horne, is superior to their comic abilities; and whose comic abilities, like Yorick's, would set the table in a roar.

Wit and humour have indeed been much more frequently employed as the enemies than as the auxiliaries of Christianity. The natural man, as he is styled in the Holy Scriptures, that is, the man who is unregenerated by grace, and he also who is but little read in theological learning, will find a multitude of particulars in Scripture which, with but a small share of ingenuity, they may perversely turn to ridicule. To be facetious on sacred subjects requires more malignity than wit.

That Voltaire had wit, none can deny but those who are destitute of it. In subjects of polite literature his wit is always delightful, though his judgement is said to be not always sound; but on subjects which concern things sacred, both his wit and his judgement deserve reprobation. Here his wit is always misapplied, as well as often false.

But allowing, for the sake of argument, that the wit of Voltaire in sacred subjects is pure and excellent, yet every man of sense and seriousness will arm himself with caution before he ventures to give

it his attention. A man has so much to gain or to lose by his religion, that he will not rashly incur the danger of losing all belief in it. He recollects that the sparks of wit are often like the fire of a nocturnal vapour, which shines only to seduce, or like some stones fabricated by art in imitation of nature, at once brilliant and false.

Reason only, or the powerful impulses of conscience, can influence a man of sense in affairs of religion. Convince me, if you can, he will say, that my religion is ill-founded, and I will relinquish it: But to convince is not in the power of wit alone. Its province is to amuse the fancy, and not to persuade the faculty of reason.

It may be rather difficult to avoid delusion when it appears under so pleasing a form as that of wit; but, as religion is confessedly of infinite consequence to our happiness, let us always prove the solidity of the wit by the touchstone of good sense. An impartial application of that test will, I am convinced, always become favourable in the result to the cause of Christianity. If we are led by curiosity to read the works of celebrated wits who have taken the part of infidelity, let us always discriminate between wit and argument, so as to be amused only by the wit, and remain unshaken in our faith till the fortress of it is battered by the main force of superior and commanding reason. Christianity has stood like a rock of ages amidst the waves of the sea, for many centuries, against every attack whether of wit or of argument, and, under the Divine Providence, there is every reason to believe that it shall stand till time itself shall be absorbed in eternity.

EVENING LXIV.

On recent Institutions for charitable Purposes.

Sui memores alios fecêre merendo. VIRG.

IF any one should be disposed to censure with uncharitable severity the vicious manners of the present age, I should wish to lead him through the environs of London, and point out to him the modern palaces erected for the poor and afflicted of all denominations. These, I would say, are the trophies of Christianity; and these, we are taught to hope, will cover a multitude of sins, and plead powerfully in favour of transgressors at the mercy-seat of the Most High.

I was walking one fine morning in St. George's Fields, when the sun shining delightfully, gilded the spires of the numerous churches in my view, and seemed to smile on the windows of the various public edifices devoted to charity around me; when I could not help exclaiming, Surely the great Father of us all, when he looks down with indignation on the crying sins of yon great city, will turn with complacency to these monuments of charity, and blot out whole pages from the tremendous volume, where he records the offences of his favourite creature.

I went on musing on the multitude of charitable institutions by which this country is honourably distinguished; and, though former times have many illustrious examples of munificence to produce, yet I congratulated myself on being born in an age in which Christian charity never shone in works of allowed public utility with greater lustre.

I confined myself, amidst the multitude of noble examples which occurred, to those which have appeared within a few years, and which have been seen, in their origin, by the race of mortals now alive.

One of the first which was suggested to my memory was that of Mr. Hetherington. I do not recollect that any particular provision had been made for the necessitous blind, labouring under the additional burden of old age; though, from the dictates of common sense and the example of our blessed Saviour, it might obviously have been concluded, that the blind are in a peculiar manner objects of Christian charity.

Mr. Hetherington has provided comfort for fifty of these objects in perpetual succession, by an annuity of ten pounds a year each, during the remainder of their dark pilgrimage. He set a noble and almost singular example by bestowing his benefaction while he was yet alive; and the example has been most honourably followed by Mr. Coventry, who has made a similar provision for thirty more, with a like exemplary bounty during life.

He again has been imitated by a benefactor, who, choosing to do good clandestinely, has alleviated the misfortune of an additional thirty, and left it to heaven only to record his name. Others also have added to the store.

At the very mention of Jonas Hanway, all that is benevolent rises to the recollection. The Marine Society has two effects so important, the providing for the poor vagabond, and the raising of a nursery of seamen, that it is no wonder the name of Hanway, to whom it owes its greatest obligations, is held in high rank among the charitable benefactors to this country.

Who ever ventured to appear the public advocate

of the chimney-sweeper but Jonas Hanway? The poor infant of five or six years old, without shoes or stockings, almost naked, almost starved, driven up the narrow flue of a high chimney, driven by the menaces and scourges of an imperious master, and sometimes terrified with flames! Think of this, ye mothers who caress your infants in your laps; and, at the same time, exert your interest and abilities, like Jonas Hanway, in preventing the employment of babes in a work under which the hardened veteran might sink with pain, terror, and fatigue. There was indeed no species of misery which this indefatigable philanthropist did not endeavour to relieve. Happy had his abilities as a writer equalled his zeal as a man. But his excellent plans were sometimes neglected, or contemned, through a deficiency of proper eloquence to recommend them. Yet for what he intended, and what he performed, his name shall be handed down to late posterity, while his bust stands erected by gratitude among the tombs of kings, and greater than kings, those who, though private persons, enlightened the understanding and alleviated the miseries of their fellow-creatures.

Of Mr. Howard's heroic philanthropy the world wants no monument more honourable than the loud plaudits of his own countrymen. By a strange forgetfulness, the state of prisons in this and other countries was deplorably neglected, and a degree of punishment was inflicted by the cold, the dampness, the filthiness, the wretched diet and accommodation, and the consequent diseases of the dungeon, far greater than the most rigorous severity of the most sanguinary laws ever intended. Mr. Howard, by visiting the prisons, by suggesting improvements in them, by causing a sense of shame in the conductors of them, and by raising a general

attention to the subject, has already diffused a gleam of comfort through the dark mansion, where misery unutterable sat and pined in hopeless agony. The prisoner breathed contagion; and whether he deserved death or not for his crime, he was likely to incur it in the loathsome prison, with all the aggravation of lingering languor. Great as was his misery, few gave themselves the trouble to notice it. Many feared infection if they approached to examine, and many, disgusted with the infamy of the guilty, scarcely acknowledged that the wretch in chains, though unconvicted, deserved compassion. But Mr. Howard, regardless of ease and life, incurred every danger, and almost forgot *their failings in their woe.*

But it is unnecessary to dwell on Mr. Howard's praise. Fortunately the public have taken it up; and there is some danger lest panegyric should be carried to an excess which frustrates its own intent, by creating a sense of excessive plenitude. I must, however, unite in reproving those who malignantly stigmatise his noble attempts with the name of Quixotism.

The Society for the Relief of Prisoners confined for Small Debts deserves to participate Mr. Howard's fame.

Many were the prejudices formed against the Society instituted for the recovery of drowned persons; but let any one place himself a moment in the situation of a parent suddenly bereaved of his child, and if he is not unfeeling in his nature, he will want no argument to induce him to give it every encouragement. Doubts were once entertained of its success; but they may be now removed by ocular demonstration. It is indeed a most affecting sight to behold those who were snatched from the jaws of death

walking on the public days in solemn procession, and paying a grateful obedience to their restorers.

The Dispensaries established, and liberally supported in various parts of the metropolis, are an additional proof of the indefatigable beneficence of the present age.

But many will be ready to detract from the institutors and benefactors, and to say, that these plausible charities are begun and supported by those who mean no more than to gratify their vanity, or promote their interest. There is reason to suspect that this may, in some instances, be true, but not in all; and while so much good is produced, it is narrow and invidious to derogate from the promoters of it, by attributing their activity to selfish incitements.

What can be said of the thousands of unambitious and disinterested persons who eagerly crowd to present their guineas in contribution to every useful mode of beneficence for which their assistance is publicly solicited? It would be no less unreasonable than mean to attribute their bounty to vanity, or any other sinister consideration. To avoid the very suspicion, many give most ample donations and conceal their names; but those who do not, ought in candour to be supposed desirous of diffusing the influence of their example and authority, rather than of seeking the applause of the world, and the reputation of generosity.

Of the various Hospitals which surround the great city, and form a better defence for it than the strongest fortification, I have said little, because they were chiefly founded in preceding times; and I wished, on the present occasion, to be confined to recent instances, and to such as have occurred within the memory of the rising generation.

From all of them I am led to conclude, that the benevolent virtues are by no means diminished among us, but that they flourish more and more under the guidance of judgement and experience; and may they still flourish, and may every one be anxious to possess a share in them, that he may have something to veil the multitude of his transgressions when he shall be summoned to give up his account at the tribunal of an omniscient and almighty Judge!

EVENING LXV.

On the Extent of Literature, and the Shortness of Time for its Cultivation.

WHILE the objects of learning are increased, the time to be spent in pursuit of it is greatly contracted by the modes of modern life. Every year produces some valuable work in some department of science or polite letters, and the accomplished scholar is expected, and cannot but wish, to give it some attention. The art of printing has multiplied books to such a degree, that it is a vain attempt either to collect or to read all that is excellent, much more all that has been published. It becomes necessary, therefore, to read in the classical sense of the word LEGERE, that is, to 'pick out,' to select the most valuable and worthiest objects, not only the best parts of books, but, previously to that selection, to choose out of an infinite number, the best books, or at least those which are best adapted to the particular pursuit or employment in life.—Without this care there is danger of confusion and distraction, of a vain labour, and of that poverty which arises from superfluity *.

The surface of the globe becomes every day more known, enlarges the field of modern history, geography, botany, and furnishes new opportunities for the study of human nature. At the revival of learning, voyages and travels constituted a very small part of the scholar's and philosopher's library; but at present, in England only, the books of this class are sufficiently numerous to fill a large museum. He who

* Inopem me copia fecit. OVID.

would understand human nature must inspect them, and will also find it necessary to have recourse to the Dutch and the French travellers. A man might find employment for his life in reading itineraries alone.

The late great improvements in science have multiplied books necessary to be read by the general scholar to a wonderful extent. The volumes of scientifical and literary societies or academies are infinite. The mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms have been accurately examined, and the result brought to public view, in crowded and bulky tomes. The minutest productions of nature have been described with prolixity; from the hyssop on the wall to the cedar of Lebanon, from the atom to the mountain, from the mite to man, the whale, and the elephant.

The study of antiquities has added greatly to the number of books. Politics, history, and law, have also crowded the library.

The field of divinity has been most industriously cultivated, and the harvest has been great. The age of Methusalem would be too short to read all the theological works of English divines; to which must be added the excellent productions of France, Holland, and other neighbouring nations. Biblical learning alone, so pregnant is the sacred volume, would occupy a long life, exclusively of all attention to practical theology.

Moral philosophy, both systematical and miscellaneous, is so far extended, that if it is all necessary to the conduct of life, every man must die without knowing how to live; for the longest life would not afford opportunities for its study.

Philology and criticism have appeared in books which equal or exceed in number and size, all those

original works united, which it was their primary intention to elucidate.

A species of books, unknown to the ancients, and such as are found to attract more readers than any others, has arisen in the last century; I mean romances and fictitious histories of private and familiar life, under the name of Novels.

Add to all this a vast quantity of poetry or verse of all kinds, and on all subjects; add tragedies and comedies; add pamphlets in all their variety, fugitive papers, publications of diurnal intelligence; and the sum becomes so great as to lead the general student to a degree of despair.

I have already said, that not only the work to be done has increased upon us, but the time of doing it has decreased, according to the modes of living which now prevail.

Early rising is not in vogue. Breakfast, with all the apparatus of tea-drinking, occupies a long time. The hair must be dressed with taste, or the student will find his learning will not give him admission into the company of people of condition and fashion, nor indeed into any company where decorum is regarded.

The newspapers must be read; or conversation may lose one of its most abundant sources. The coffee-house perhaps claims an hour. Morning calls must be made, and engraved cards left with servants, or friendship and patronage may be irrecoverably lost. A morning walk or ride will conduce to an appetite, and the person must be dressed from head to foot, before a genteel student can think of meeting company at dinner. Very little time, it is evident, can be found in the midst of all these necessary occupations for poring over folios. To neglect any of

them for his book may cause a man to be called an odd fellow and dismissed to Coventry.

But the morning lost, you will say, may be recovered by the diligence of the afternoon. Impossible; for the hour of dining is the same which in the days of that polite scholar and fine gentleman, sir Philip Sydney, used to be the supper time: and convivial pleasures are so great, as to render him who should relinquish them for musty books obnoxious to the imputation of an ascetic or a book-worm. Indeed the mind is unfit for contemplation after a full meal and a generous glass. Various amusements intervene to employ the time till the hour of repose closes the season both of action and contemplation.

While so much is to be done, and so little is the time, how can we expect to find many profoundly learned? And yet there is as much pretension to learning, and as much volubility upon all subjects of science, as could be expected in the most erudite age. How is this phenomenon accounted for?

In the first place, 'superficial learning,' quite enough to qualify talkers, and to satisfy common hearers, is easily picked up by reading the newspapers and periodical pamphlets, in which little scraps are dealt out, like small wares at a retail shop, for the convenience of the poor; who, though they have no store-room, make shift to live from hand to mouth, and hide their poverty.

In the next and the principal place, a reliance ON GENIUS, as it is called, without application, gives a boldness of utterance and assertion, which often sets off base metal with the glitter of gold. Never was an age when there were so many pretenders to GENIUS. The great art is, under the confidence of genius, to make the most advantageous display of the lit-

tle learning you have, to disparage what you have not, to put a good face upon defect, and supply weakness and want of real merit by a noisy confidence and boisterous pretension to 'native' powers, above the reach of application. It is not uncommon to throw contempt upon all who show, by their willingness to labour in pursuit of knowledge, a persuasion that, though a man may be born with powers to acquire knowledge, yet that he is not born with knowledge acquired, with innate science, history, philosophy, and languages.

Knowledge may certainly be acquired by one man sooner than by another, and in much greater abundance; but it must be acquired by application, for it is neither innate nor can be mechanically infused.

Since, then, the field of knowledge is enlarged, and the time to be spent in cultivating it contracted, it is requisite that the student should select a little part of the field only for particular cultivation; and thus, by husbanding his time so as to dig and manure it well, he may carry home a good crop of corn, while others are contented with spontaneous weeds, leaves, thorns, thistles, stubble, chaff, and underwood.

Let him enjoy the prospect of the fine country around as far as the horizon extends; but let him be satisfied with cultivating with his own hands a little *ferme ornée*, well laid out, prettily diversified, and within a moderate inclosure.

Evening LXVI.

On the uncouth Names often used by Writers to exemplify Characters.

SIR,

Somebody, I think, has very properly taken notice of the odd names which Dr. Watts has used to distinguish those characters which he introduces to illustrate his moral instructions. The characters are commonly grave; but the names are often such as give them something of a ludicrous air. He was a man of learning, judgement, and angelic goodness: but I know not whether his taste in literary matters has not been too highly appreciated. I do not recollect the fictitious name which was selected as an instance of absurdity; but in looking for it, I found those of Polonides, Polyramus, Fluvio, and Credonius; all of which are strangely uncouth. Such are also in the same book, Jocander, Positivo, Scitorio, Scintillo, Thebaldino, Niveo, and Plumbinus.

If writers mean to give their characters the appearance of truth, they should not select ancient names for living persons, much less names formed by their own capricious invention, and such as never were given to men of any age or country.—We know, indeed, that the name is a mask; but the mask of a respectable character should resemble neither a monster nor a caricatura. Let all fiction which is intended to please, approach as nearly as possible to reality *.

I own I am not pleased with the generality of our dialogue writers, who give their persons Greek and Roman names, though at the same time they make

* Ficta voluptatis causâ sint proxima veris. Hor.

them talk like Englishmen, and allude to modern customs, manners, and places. There is an incongruity in these, which lessens much of the entertainment which the dialogue might otherwise afford.

Why may not modern names be admitted into modern dialogue? You will say perhaps, Palæmon and Philander, Eugenius and Eusebius, have a prettier sound than Smith, Johnson, Walker, Benson, Hudson. The Latin and Greek languages have a prettier sound than the English: and therefore we may, for the same reason, write the whole dialogue in those languages. It is another plea for adopting Greek and Latin names, that, as the Romans did not use the ceremonious salutations of the moderns, a great deal of trouble is avoided by omitting the unmeaning modes of address, Sir, Madam, Your Grace, and My Lord, which some imagine necessary when they introduce a conversation between such personages as Mr. Smith, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Melville, Lord Clarendon, and the Duke of Kent.

But I think these ceremonious appellations may be omitted with less violation of probability and propriety, than is caused by introducing Greeks and Romans talking about the doctrines of Christianity, the laws of our country, and other subjects on which they could not be made to converse without a violent anachronism.

When the subject relates entirely to antiquity, ancient names are not improper; indeed, as the ancients may be supposed better acquainted with such subjects than the moderns, the mind is pleased with the propriety of introducing them as the interlocutors.

But while the matter is good, it is not right to cavil at trifles which are no more than forms. Per-

haps my remarks are hypercritical: that they may not be tedious, I will here conclude them.

I am, Sir,
to borrow one of Dr. Watts's names,
Your humble Servant,
POLYBAMUS.

SIR,

I AM a great lover of learning; but not having had the advantage of a liberal education, I am totally unacquainted with the learned languages; and I lament the defect as a real misfortune. I hear much of their excellence, and you may suppose it a great mortification to me, that I am unable to read those books which have been celebrated as the finest productions of the human intellect. I endeavour to compensate my defect by reading English authors; but I often stumble upon Latin mottoes and sentences, which I suppose to contain some jewel too precious to be exposed to vulgar view, and locked up in a casket of which I have not the key.

But I am not only puzzled and mortified with mottoes and sentences which I do not understand, but often with strange names of characters in moral writers, and of persons who converse in fictitious dialogues, which I have no doubt contain some significant meaning, which I am at a loss to unriddle.

Dr. More, in his Dialogues, introduces the following persons; Philotheus, Bathynous, Sophron, Philopolis, Euister, Hylobares, and *Cuphophron*. Every one of these is expressive of the character introduced; but I should have been quite in the dark about them, and have wondered at their oddity, if the Doctor had not obligingly explained their mean-

ing in one of the first pages of his volume. I wish the example had been followed by many others, who introduce me into the company of persons whose characters I do not know, because I do not understand the meaning of their crabbed names.

I humbly conceive, that it would be quite as well, if writers suffered the characters to open themselves to the reader in the course of the conversation; and I see no good reason why christian and surnames of honest Englishmen may not be given to persons who come forward to talk on subjects which they must understand far better than the wisest of the ancients; I mean such as Dr. More discusses, the attributes of God, and his Providence in this world; but in truth, I find, on inquiry, that these names are not the names of ancients. They occur not in history, but are compounded of words that seldom met before, to express ideas which can only be understood by those who are acquainted with the learned languages. Such names appear to me to have no more propriety than some of those which, in the times of fanaticism, were used by the Puritans, such as Praise-God Bare-bones, Make-peace Heaton, Kill-sin Pimple, and Fly-debate Roberts; the names of some among the jurymen impannelled in Sussex during the usurpation of Cromwell.

I acknowledge, however, that the ancient and high-sounding names adopted in English dialogues give a dignity to the discourse; but I, who am a mere Englishman, wish to see Englishmen introduced, without being ashamed of their names, and do not know why the names of Clarendon, Temple, Raleigh, and a thousand others equally well sounding, might not answer the purpose as well as names borrowed from Greece and Rome; and as to the significancy of the above-mentioned compound appellations, what

should I be the wiser for it without an explanatory table? What must I think of Dr. More's *Cuphophron*? I should not know the sense of the word; and, I am sure, I could not admire the sound. Few Gothic names are of more difficult pronunciation.

But I ought not to judge decisively, as I profess myself no scholar. I only submit to you my complaint, as an English reader. I shall be much obliged to you to desire gentlemen, who may hereafter write dialogues, and introduce uncommon names as exemplifications of their instruction, either to give modern names, or such as are known in history, or else always to add an explanatory table.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

AN ENGLISH READER.

Evening LXVII.

On Caligula's Attempt to suppress the Works of Livy and Virgil.

The tyrants who oppressed Rome in the decline of her empire, were not satisfied with depriving men of their civil rights, but often attempted to chain the mind in servitude, and to domineer with absolute control, where they certainly had no claim to pre-eminence, in the republic of literature. One of the most singular and barbarous attempts upon record was that of Caligula, who formed a design of abolishing the poems of Homer, and had nearly accomplished his purpose of banishing from all the libraries of his time, the busts and the works of Livy and Virgil. He could not bear that those noble efforts of genius, breathing a spirit of liberty and virtue which he could not but hate, should continue to diffuse such sentiments as must teach all who imbibed them to detest him as a monster.

The following is the account of this matter given by Suetonius: "Cogitavit etiam de Homeri carminibus abolendis. Cur enim sibi non liceret, dicens, quod Platoni licuisset, qui eum a civitate, quam constituebat, ejecerit? Sed Virgilii et Titi Livii scripta et imagines, paulum abfuit, quin ex omnibus bibliothecis amoveret; quorum alterum ut nullius ingenii, minimæque doctrinæ; alterum, ut verbosum, in historiâ negligentemque, carpebat*."

Flagitious as was his reign, I know not whether any thing he could have done would have been more in-

* Sueton. Calig. cap. 34.

jurious, than if he had succeeded in extinguishing those glorious lights. The atrocious malignity of his immoral and tyrannical actions was confined to his own age; but this would have descended to posterity, and continued the effects of his despotism long after the great teacher, Death, had humbled his pride, by reducing him to the dust, not distinguishable from the poorest wretch whom his insolence despised, and his cruelty persecuted. Indeed his design was impracticable; for, with all his power, he could not have prevented some votary of taste and genius from preserving in secret the noble reliques of these illustrious ornaments of human nature.

I have no doubt but the same disposition which could form a wish to abolish Homer, would have rejoiced, if it had been possible, to have extinguished the sun, or to have dried up the ocean. Such tyranny exhibits a melancholy monument of human wickedness, and at the same time furnishes a salutary warning to the world, not to trust enormous power in the hands of a fellow-creature. Human nature retains so much of inherent malignity, that he who possesses power uncontrouled will be in imminent danger of imitating and nearly resembling the parent of all evil*.

But the wicked never want the artifice of giving to their malice some colourable pretence. Caligula alleged that he should be justified in the abolition of Homer by the example of Plato, who banished the poets from his imaginary republic. But what was Plato's motive? a desire to preserve the morals of youth, whose ideas he thought were corrupted and distorted, by an initiation into the strange mysteries of fiction, instead of the knowledge of substantial and

* Dic mihi si fueris tu lec, qualis eris. MART.

practical realities. He did not mean to abolish their works, or to preclude men, whose reason was mature, from the study of them. He only thought, as many others have thought, that on the minds of young men, the slaves of passion and fancy, they might operate in the same manner as novels and romances have been observed to do, in firing the passions and misleading the imagination. But was Caligula's motive for their expulsion a fear that they might diffuse corruption? No such apprehension ever agitated his bosom. His fear was, lest they should teach a virtue to which he could never attain, and raise a spirit inimical to his manners, his person, and his tyranny. He must have known that, among all the persons described by Homer, he was worthy only to be ranked with such wretches as Thersites. Before he could shine, he knew that all true glory must be shaded, as the sun must retire before the feeble light which arises from a foul vapour can become visible.

But he assigns a reason for the expulsion of Virgil and Livy. Virgil, says he, has no genius, and a very small share of learning; and Livy is verbose in his style, and negligent in his narrative.

Caligula must be excepted against as an incompetent judge both of learning and genius; for it requires a considerable share of both, to form a just opinion of the degree in which they are possessed by a writer. If Virgil had not genius, he would not, I think, have continued so long the delight and admiration of all who have read his works with taste. He has Longinus's criterion of genius, the united voice of various ages and nations, in his favour. He has Caligula, and a few other men of debauched taste, against him, which is almost as great an honour as the general approbation.

The truth is, that Virgil has a remarkably happy

union of genius with learning; and a judgement also to guide him in the conduct of both, with that propriety which enables him to delight at once the reason and the fancy. Genius, without learning, often delights the fancy; but the judgement must in the mean time sleep, or the pleasure will be diminished and interrupted.

Whoever has read the works of Virgil, in the excellent edition of Heyne, will want no argument to convince him, that Virgil did not deserve the stigma which Caligula would have fixed on him, that of 'very little learning;' and whoever has sensibility will feel the falsehood of the detracting spirit, that dared to assert of him that he had 'no genius.' It must ever be an honour to suffer detraction from such men as Caligula.

It is very easy to assign a reason for his dislike of Livy. A most arbitrary tyrant, and most profligate man, could not but wish to destroy the works of an historian, who exhibits the assertors of liberty, and the virtuous patriots of a virtuous republic, in such colours as must at once excite love and lead to imitation. Caligula's charge of verbosity in the style of Livy is utterly groundless. He expresses himself with a noble brevity, and with that concise dignity, which evinced that he had a Roman soul; such a soul as was adequate to the noble undertaking of a Roman history. The other charge, that of negligence in his account of facts, originated from the malignant wish of the tyrant, to diminish the credit of an historian who related deeds of so bright a splendour, as must render the page in which his own should be recorded, foul indeed. Time has unfortunately done much to accomplish the nefarious wish of Caligula, in the destruction of the works of Livy; but enough remains to delight every man of taste, and warm the

bosom with magnanimous sentiments, and the generous ardour of public virtue.

It is greatly to be lamented, when princes, instead of patronising genius, endeavour to repress its aspiring vigour. Such a conduct arises, in such men as Caligula, from envy and malice; but a neglect of genius is occasioned in others by ignorance, and a total deficiency of taste for works which the world applauds. Even Hadrian, we are told, wished to abolish Homer's works, and substitute in his room the poems of one Antimachus. He thought it was time to leave off admiring old Homer, that he had been admired long enough, and that he should gratify the passion for novelty, by introducing in his place a modern versifier. He puts one in mind of the rough warrior, who told the captain to whose care he had consigned some fine pictures, which he had taken as spoils, that if they were lost or injured, they should be renewed at the captain's expense.

Men of sense look down upon such emperors, when they dictate in matters of taste, with as much contempt as the emperors can do on the meanest of their vassals. When learning is diffused throughout a nation, the works of taste and genius flourish and abound independently of the smiles or the frowns of princes.

Evening LXVIII.

On Erasmus's Praise of Marriage.

Among the marks of modern profligacy may be enumerated the reluctance with which young men enter the marriage state. The affections of many are in vain solicited by any charms besides those of lucre. The times seem to be past, when, in the prime of life, virtuous love led young men to select a companion, for the amiable qualities of her mind and person, independently of all pecuniary considerations. The loveliest of women may now pine in hopeless celibacy; for, if they cannot purchase a husband, as they would purchase a gown, with the contents of their purse, they may live and die without one. In vain has nature given them the vermeil cheek, and the eye of sensibility, if fortune has refused her more brilliant gifts. Young men gaze at them indeed, like children at the peacock, and turn away without any tenderness of sentiment, or, at least without any wish to possess the beauty which they admire, on honourable conditions.

It is indeed observable, that young men of the present age too often consider marriage as an evil in itself, only to be incurred when the pecuniary advantages attending it afford a compensation. For the sake of the good, it seems, they sometimes condescend to accept the evil. A most insulting opinion, and no less unreasonable and untrue than contumelious; for marriage, prudent and affectionate marriage, is favourable to every virtue that can contribute to the comfort and happiness of the indivi-

dual, while it most essentially serves the interests of society.

I was thinking on this subject, when I accidentally opened a little book of Erasmus on the Art of Letter Writing. He gives models of letters on various subjects, and, under the appearance of affording hints, in a didactic way, for the use of students, contrives to recommend several most useful things, with great force of argument, and in a very entertaining manner. I happened to open the book in the place where he is writing a persuasive to marriage, and I was so well pleased with several of his topics, that I determined to select a few of them for the consideration of my readers. I mean not literally to translate or to give the whole of his persuasive. There are parts in it which one cannot entirely approve; but there are others which every heart, that is not spoiled by fashion and false philosophy, must admire.

Is there any friendship, says he, among mortals, comparable to that between man and wife? For the love of you, he proceeds, your wife has ceased to value the tenderness of parents, brothers, sisters; to you alone she looks for happiness, on you she depends, with you she wishes to live and to die.

Are you rich? you have one who will endeavour to preserve and to increase your property. Are you in narrow circumstances? you have one who will assist you faithfully in the pursuit of gain. If you enjoy prosperity, she will double your happiness; if you are in adversity, she will console you, she will sit by your side, she will wait upon you with all the assiduity of love, and only wish that she could appropriate the misfortune which gives you pain. Is there any pleasure to be compared with an union of hearts like this?

I must add the next passage in his own words.

'Si domi agis, adest quæ solitudinis tædium depellat; si foris, est quæ discedentem osculo prosequatur, absentem desideret, redeuntem læta excipiat.'

She is the sweet companion of your youth, and the pleasant solace of your old age.

What can be more odious than that man, who, as if he were born for himself, lives for himself, heaps up riches for himself, spares for himself, spends for himself, loves no human creature but himself, and is beloved by none?

How will you value your happiness,

——Ubi quis tibi parvulus aula,
Luserit Æneas,

qui tuos tuæque conjugis vultus referat, qui te BLANDA BALBUTIE PATREM APPELLITET.

I know, says he, that you will object that all this happiness depends upon the disposition of the wife, more than on the marriage state. A marriage may be thus happy if the wife be good; but suppose her ill-natured, suppose her unchaste, and suppose the children undutiful. Believe me, the bad husband usually makes the bad wife. You certainly have it in your power to choose a good one; but what if she should afterwards be spoiled? Erasmus confidently replies, A good wife may indeed be spoiled by a bad husband, but a bad wife is usually reformed by a good one. FALSÒ UXORES ACCUSAMUS. No body, he assures us (I am afraid too confidently), ever had a bad wife but by his own fault. And with respect to children, good children, says he, are usually born of good parents; but however they may have been born, they commonly become just such as they are made by education and example.

But why, continues he, do you so anxiously enumerate the inconveniencies of marriage? just as if celibacy were totally free from them, or as if any mode of human life were not subject to evil and misfortune! If you would have no inconvenient circumstances in your state, you must leave this life. '*Sin intra humanam conditionem animum contineas, nihil est conjugali vita, neque tutius, neque tranquillius, neque jucundius, neque amabilius, neque felicius.*' But if one can restrain one's desires within the boundaries of happiness which belong to human nature, there is no state safer, more tranquil, pleasanter, lovelier, or happier, than the conjugal.

Though Erasmus is seeking hints to supply the young letter-writer with matter for his compositions, yet I cannot but think that he spoke his honest sentiments, because he spoke with warmth, and, I believe, meant obliquely to censure those unnatural institutions of the Romish church, which tend to discourage marriage. He is very copious on the subject, and advances many arguments, which I have not room to transcribe, and which indeed will appear to much greater advantage in the original. I must not conceal that, to show his ingenuity, he has written a dissuasive from marriage; but it really contains no argument which is valid, or which is worthy of repetition.

I am of opinion, that the reluctance of many young men of fortune to enter into the state, arises not from any settled conviction of the unreasonableness of the institution, but from profligacy, thoughtlessness, false ideas of pleasure, and a want of rational ideas of human life and the nature of human happiness. But, whatever is the cause, the effect is certainly unhappy both to men and women. Men, indeed, in consequence of their libertinism, gratify their desires in

the haunts of vice; and so much the worse, for they thus add sin to misery. Women are often kept in a state of celibacy, for which nature never designed them, and to which, I may say, without attributing to them indecency or immodesty, they are in general not much inclined. It is happy, however, that reserve and virtue so far prevail among them, as, for the most part, to prevent them from forming improper connections, in consequence of being thus injuriously prevented from making a matrimonial alliance. It is to be hoped, they will still preserve their dignity by preserving their innocence; but their case is hard, and nothing, which a wise legislature can do to alleviate it, should be omitted. Many nations have taken great pains to encourage marriage; but ours places some obstacles in its way, which, though often salutary in the higher classes, are, perhaps injurious in the subordinate.

A reformation of manners, among the young men who lead the fashion, would contribute most to the encouragement of marriage; for where libertinism greatly prevails, celibacy, which is favourable to it, will be predominant. Perhaps, if women were instructed in useful as well as ornamental arts, and were less expensive in dress and diversions, the rest might be left to the natural operation of their beauty and agreeable accomplishments. As the small-pox is in great measure defeated, they certainly never appeared more beautiful than in the present time; and ornamental accomplishments were never pursued by them with more ardour, or advanced to higher perfection.

EVENING LXIX.

On neglecting the Practice of drinking Health at Table.

Tarde cyathos mihi das; cedo sane: bene mihi: bene vobis.
PLAUTUS.

SIR,

I LATELY addressed to you a few observations on the omission of grace at table; and I now beg leave to add some remarks on another omission, which fashion seems to recommend, but which is countenanced neither by the examples of the ancients, nor by reason, nor by a sense of propriety. I observed, on my visit to my old friend in London, that the friendly practice of drinking health at dinner was, in most of the fashionable families, very much on the decline, and in many totally omitted. Indeed, the omission arises from a principle which seems very much to prevail in the present age, and which aims at the abolition of all forms and ceremonies, as meaning nothing, and at the same time giving trouble and excluding ease. Forms and ceremonies undoubtedly have their utility, or they would not have been universally retained in every age and nation which history has recorded. But allowing some forms to be without meaning, I cannot suppose, unless I throw a severer reflection on the friendship and hospitality of modern times than I choose, that the drinking of health is, without exception, a senseless and empty ceremony. A man of a warm and friendly heart usually feels a sentiment of cordial kindness, when he holds the cup of refreshment in

his hand, and wishes health and happiness to his friends, who are partaking with him of the same innocent and necessary pleasure.

The custom prevailed among the Greeks, who carried the elegance which they displayed in the polite arts, to the table and social circle, assembled to enjoy the pleasures of the palate and of discourse. Homer, indeed, has given the model in the first book of the Iliad, who says of the gods at their feast,

χρυσεοις δεπαεσσι
Δειδεχατ' αλληλους.

The manner of drinking to each other resembled what is called among us 'pledging.' The person who drank to his friend was said προπινειν, or to drink first. He drank a part of the cup, and then handed the rest to the friend whom he had named. The words which passed on the occasion were προπινω σοι καλως, to which the person saluted, λαμβανω απο σου ηδεως, which may be thus freely translated: 'I have the honour to drink to you—I pledge you with pleasure.'

It was also the custom, after due respect paid to the gods, to drink to absent friends; and, as an emblem of sincerity, it was established as a law never to dilute the wine drunk on this occasion.

I shall not trouble you with various proofs that the custom of drinking health is justified by the example of the politest people of antiquity. It would be easy to collect them from the writers on antiquities; but the instance alleged is sufficient for my purpose, and will serve to confute those who hint that the custom is unpolite.

There is surely something peculiarly brutal in sitting down to meals without ever thinking of God or

man; in neglecting the grace, and omitting the form of wishing health and happiness to those who sit at the same table. We have seen that it is contrary to the practice of antiquity, and of almost all people in the world, who, though they varied in the forms of the table, agreed in the essential points, in giving glory to God on high, and testifying good-will towards men.

Yours, &c.

A RATIONAL FORMALIST.

The omission of drinking health is by no means general; but, as it has been countenanced at the tables of persons of fashion, it may probably descend to their imitators in lower life, and in time become universal. My correspondent has therefore very properly expressed his disapprobation of it. It certainly displays something of selfishness, and is contrary to the general sense of the most enlightened and polished people. It can only be justified with certain qualifications and restrictions. It is troublesome, in a large company, to drink the health of every guest respectively; and troublesome formalities ought not to be scrupulously adhered to, when they contravene the very purpose of the meeting, which was certainly to promote cheerfulness, enjoyment, and ease.

But forms, not evidently and intolerably burthensome and foolish, are certainly to be retained, as they constitute those outworks which often preserve the interior parts from assault and destruction. The

drinking of health is significant of that good-will which ought to prevail among fellow-creatures happily enjoying at the same table the bounty of their common Parent and Creator; and though it may be attended with a little trouble, yet there is a great decency and propriety in it, and to bear the trouble may be considered as an additional exercise of benevolence.

I cannot help expressing a sentiment of pity, or rather of contempt, for persons who think to recommend themselves as genteel and superior to the vulgar, merely by such easy means as the omission of decent and reasonable ceremonies. I suppose they mean to claim the merit of being superior to prejudice; but I think they are under a very silly prejudice, when they think themselves wise enough to be justified in contradicting the common sense and common practice of mankind; and when they suppose that singularity alone can give them merit, and cause them justly to plume themselves on conscious superiority.

Observe at table that fine lady, and that fine gentleman by her side. How they lift their eyebrows, and smile with ineffable contempt. Heavens! has there been any moral turpitude, or any gross violation of decency committed? None. But you must know, that yonder gentleman, who is just arrived from the country, where he has resided for a long time, drank to the lady in small beer, and stood up to say grace, and to make a bow to the master of the house. He might have sworn profanely, talked indecently, or drunk intemperately, and if he had shown but the cant of fashion, they who now despise him, would have admired and caressed him as 'a good man,' and as one who had the air and man-

ners of a 'well-bred man;' that air and those manners, which, in the opinion of many, are more estimable than all that virtue ever achieved, wisdom ever taught, or revelation ever discovered. Without that air and those manners, a Solomon would be deemed a fool, and a Socrates voted an intolerably awkward fellow.

Evening LXX.

On the Utility of Amusements to Old Age.

It is a natural conclusion from the shortness of life, that none of it should be thrown away; and it is therefore thought wonderful, that there should be many contrivances to abbreviate the duration of what is confessed already to be too much circumscribed. Now pastimes of all kinds are considered as contrivances to wear away time without reflection, and are therefore censured by severe philosophy, as arguing absurdity in man, who is for ever lamenting the brevity of his existence. But, as man is constituted, it must be denied that the time spent in amusement is always thrown away; and, perhaps, time thus spent will be found to lengthen rather than to abbreviate our duration.

It contributes, when under the restraint of moderation, to confirm health and exhilarate the spirits; both which effects of it not only become causes of long life, but also enable a man to act with vigour and efficacy in the employments of a profession, and in the common duties of society. Thus it not only renders life more comfortable, but more useful.

It is, however, true, that in the vigorous seasons of youth and health, some serious and important employment should be engaged in, which may serve society, advance the interests of a family, or elevate the meritorious individual in the ranks of civil life.

But in old age, when these ends shall have been accomplished, and infirmities begin to increase*, the

* Solve senescentem maturè sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus, et ilia ducat. Hor.

active mind will still require an object, and the object ought to be of such a kind as agitates moderately, not like the storm, but like the gentle breeze of a fine summer evening.

Hobby horses are very desirable at all ages; but necessary in old age, when the sources of amusement begin to fail. It was this which induced the sensible and experienced Geron to keep an aviary. He had relinquished a busy life, and retired from London to a little country town, where, though there was an agreeable neighbourhood, there were few diversions but those of cards; which, notwithstanding he liked them very well, could not occupy all his time and attention. They are chiefly a winter and an evening amusement, and he wanted some pastime, besides reading, for the summer, and for his mornings. He therefore built a little room in his garden, and fitted it up, with admirable contrivance, as an aviary. The building of it, the conveniencies, and the improvements which he was continually adding, caused him much pleasure; and it soon became an object of high ambition to breed the most beautiful Canary birds. He succeeded in his attempts, and, more than once, carried the prize given by a society of bird-fanciers for producing a bird of the finest plumage. He taught bulfinches to pipe a tune, and made them presents to his friends, as instances of singular favour. He reared nightingales from the nest, and attended them with all a parent's solicitude. The delicate, the elegant woodlark was one of his first favourites, and he listened with fresh delight when his birds warbled their morning melody, which he fancifully considered as songs of gratitude and love to himself in return for food and protection.

But, that he might secure variety, which is ne-

cessary to add a zest to amusement, he has added several other hobby-horses to this his first favourite. He has acquired a taste for tulips, and prides himself on making a more beautiful display of this gaudy flower in the month of May, than any florist in his vicinity. I called it a gaudy flower: but I speak like an inelegant spectator, when I use a contemptuous epithet in mentioning it; for though to a common eye, a bed of tulips presents only a glare of vivid colours, to a connoisseur it exhibits peculiar elegance as well as finery. Geron views his tulips with the affection and complacency of a lover.

The garden affords him many sources of amusement. He attends not indeed to the olitory, and his strength will not permit him to take an active part in the labours of horticulture. But he has a small green-house, to every part of which he gives a daily attention; and its various beauty amply repays him, as indeed nothing is more grateful, in return for care and labour, than the tribe of vegetables.

To add to his amusements, he has stocked a fish-pond in a meadow adjoining to his little garden; and, instead of taking out all the fish at once, by emptying the pond, or drawing it, which is the usual practice of country gentlemen, he makes a rule that no fish shall be caught out of it but by angling, which he thinks the only fair method of fishing among those who fish for diversion. His strength will not permit him to follow the piscatory sport in the river, as he can neither stand long, nor walk a great way; and he has the sense, wherever he cannot accommodate the nature of the diversion to himself, to submit himself to the nature of the diversion.

He has many little amusements in the house, as well as in the aviary, the garden, and canal. As he is properly disposed in religious matters, the reading

of the Scriptures, with a comment, and of pious books of the best characters, fills up, agreeably as well as usefully, an hour or two every day; but more especially when the weather is rainy, or in any respect inclement and unpleasant.

Visits, and cards in moderation, contribute to enliven his time in an agreeable vicissitude; and, the consequence of his wise distribution of his leisure hours, he enjoys a cheerfulness which contributes, perhaps more than any thing else, to health and longevity.

His neighbour Bibo ridicules his amusements as trifling and puerile. Bibo is nearly as old as Geron, but he is not yet free from youthful vanity. He is an old beau, sportsman, gamester, and bottle companion; but his infirmities often prevent him from acting in these characters; and when on a good day (as he calls it, whenever he is tolerably well) he attempts them, he never acquits himself to his own satisfaction. Old age, and the depredations of time, are his great complaint. He has no resource in himself, and cultivates no taste for domestic and harmless diversions. He mopes over the fire in the morning, and the bottle in the afternoon. Melancholy and bodily disease, increased by indolence and excess, accelerate the evils and aggravate the pains of age.

How happy would Bibo have been, if he had condescended to give up the gravity of the gamester, and the affectation of the beau, and adopted a taste for some innocent hobby-horse, which he now despises as too childish and unimportant to deserve his notice!

Evening LXXI.

On some little Artifices to gain Consequence in vulgar Eyes.

Such is the natural pride of the human heart, that there is scarcely any trifling distinction which can attract notice, that will not be pursued with eagerness, and fill the possessor's bosom with self-esteem.

One of the easiest, and therefore the commonest methods of drawing attention by trifles, is that of talking loud at all places of public resort. There is something so spirited in it, so charmingly careless, and it gives such an air of superiority, by seeming to despise all the hearers, as if they were no more than stocks and stones, that it seldom fails of exciting not only notice, but some degree of awe and admiration.

I have heard many a fine gentleman and lady, while strutting up and down a crowded walk, question each other on the last night's ball, or their engagements to dinner, in a voice so loud as silenced the rest of the company, and caused a general hum of inquiry, Who are these? Thus the end was answered. The hearers were awestruck and browbeaten, and the happy pair marched off in triumph, like a king and queen of Brentford, till the next morning, when they returned to make new conquests. From their volubility and vehement loudness, they acquired, among many silly listeners, the character of people of infinite sense and spirit, and became the leaders of the Ton.

Another method of gaining notice and admiration, is to swear and swagger at inns, or at any other place, where we are among our inferiors, or are un-

known. It is, to be sure, wonderful to observe how respectful a reception a rude fellow meets with, who, with a cockade in his hat judiciously cocked over his eye, with a stick in his hand, and an oath in his mouth, enters an inn and calls about him with a voice like that of the men who cry peas and beans in the streets of London. There have been generals, admirals, colonels, and captains, who never appeared so formidable, or displayed so much prowess, as in storming an inn in a country town. And the petty gentry, who imitate such heroes, consider themselves as personages of great consequence, when they break the bell wire by the violence of their ringing, frighten the landlady with their fierce looks, send the waiters scampering like men beside themselves, and, with their oaths, set the whole house, yards, and stables, in an uproar.

Knocking vehemently at a door, especially if it be done according to the latest method invented by people of fashion in the squares, adds very considerably to personal importance.

Singularity in dress is one of the commonest modes of seeking distinction; but by singularity I do not mean a deviation from the established fashion, but compliance with it carried to an extreme. An enormous pair of buckles has given many a young man a degree of confidence, which no learning or virtue which he possessed could ever have supplied. A hat, a coat, a shoe, or a shoestring, of a shape, or size, or colour, exceeding the ordinary mode, have fixed the eyes of a whole assembly, and gratified the ambitious wearer with the most heartfelt satisfaction.

Some, rather than not be noticed at all, will endeavour to draw the eyes of their fellow-creatures upon them by such profusion and expenses, as cause an execution in their houses, and force them to elope.

Hunted by bailiffs and creditors, it is still some consolation to them, that they are the reigning topic. Vices are often practised with a desire of being rendered remarkable; and many plume themselves, as persons of the first consequence; if their profligacy causes them to become the subjects of paragraphs in a newspaper.

Vanity indeed operates with so violent a force, on some minds, that it seems to contradict itself, and defeat its own purpose: for, in pursuit of notice and distinction, it will even industriously seek disgrace.

As the desire of fame, or distinction, seems natural in man, I contend not against it; but I wish it to operate in urging to acts of singular beneficence and social utility, rather than to spend its force in trifles, follies, vanities, and vices.

But of the greater part of these ambitious persons whom I have just described, it may, I believe, be said, that they would act wisely to avoid instead of seeking distinction, for they seem to be of that character, to which the emphatical words of an elegant political writer may most justly be applied—"a character which will only pass without censure, when it passes without observation."

If men find themselves insensibly impelled, by the ambition of their nature, to seek distinction, let them learn to seek it by arts and virtues which embellish life, and diffuse happiness or convenience through the various ranks of society. If they cannot do this, let them contentedly acquiesce in harmless obscurity.

EVENING LXXII.

On the Expediency of making expensive Connexions to promote the inferior Trades.

——— Purpura vendit
Causidicum; vendunt amethystina. JUV.

In the eye of reason there is certainly no necessary connexion between ostentation and excellence. Can the keeping of a chariot be a proof of pre-eminence of knowledge? Certainly not. But such is the world, that the physician on foot stands no chance of being employed, if his rival rides in his chariot.

The preference of the medical professor who makes a fashionable appearance, to him that does not, has been always remarkable; so much so, that it is almost a proverbial question, What is a doctor without his chariot? Formerly large wigs, gold-headed canes, full-trimmed coats, and solemn looks, were considered as natural signs of profound knowledge. They are indeed now voluntarily laid aside by the gentlemen themselves; who seem to think it no disadvantage to appear young in person, and easy in manners. But still the appearance of fashionable life, of servants and equipage, is a very powerful recommendation of them to public favour.

A similar unreasonable association of superior excellence, to a splendid appearance, seems visible in almost every art, trade, and profession.

And this it is which forms one of the most frequent excuses, in young persons, for launching out a little, as they call it, or living beyond their income.

In the lower orders of mercantile life, a young man begins trade with his little patrimony, or with

the gift of a living parent, who, perhaps, distresses himself to raise a sum which, though moderate, might, under proper management, grow, like a handful of seed, to a large quantity. A shop, or rather a 'warehouse' (for, as Juvenal says,

——— hic vivimus ambitiosâ
Paupertate omnes ———

and every thing must now have a magnificent name), is hired at a considerable rent. It must, in the first place, be fitted up not only neatly and conveniently (for neatness and convenience are mean ideas), but elegantly, and sumptuously, in the newest taste.

The door-posts are adorned with sculpture, and the name and trade exhibited on a gorgeous tablet adorned with a profusion of gold and colour. The counters, the drawers, the shelves are mahogany; and the master and mistress are every day attired by the most fashionable hair-dresser, and descend (which is but rarely) from the sumptuous dining-room to stand behind the counter, just as if they were going into a drawing-room, or the presence-chamber.

Connexions are sought with the utmost diligence. To promote them, visits are paid and received with all the formality of fashion. The glass in the dining-room is stuck round with gilt cards of invitation to dinners, suppers, balls, and assemblies.

Well; all this is very pleasing; but how goes on business in the shop—(I beg pardon) in the warehouse? O, the scrubs mind that. Mr. and Mrs. Diaper are too much engaged in dressing in the morning and visiting in the afternoon to regard the low concerns of the shop. The clerk, the journeyman, the apprentice, and the porter, are hired purposely for that business. But let Mr. and Mrs. Diaper alone; they know what they are about, they are pro-

moting trade, by making connexions and 'cutting a figure.' "There is absolutely no succeeding in the present days without cutting a figure."

But the misfortune is, every one is 'cutting a figure,' to the utmost extent of their pecuniary abilities; and the connexions which Mr. and Mrs. Diaper make, are themselves making connexions, for the sake of advancing their interest. But none of them have a fund sufficient to support the expenses of the fashionable life which they affect; and, in the course of a few years, they all, in their turn, 'cut a lamentable figure' in the London Gazette.

In higher classes, and in professions and employments which might justly claim a right to genteel life, it is usual to go beyond the line of moderation and propriety, with the delusive idea, that the greater figure a man makes in the external circumstances of a fine house, a luxurious table, a splendid equipage, a tribe of servants, the more likely he is to succeed, and to be aggrandized. In the mean time, he himself is sapping the foundation of his own greatness, and the visionary fabric soon falls to rise no more.

These ambitious persons, who hope to raise themselves by affecting a rank they cannot support, are well described in the celebrated fable of the frog and the ox. They and their families, after a short struggle, become ridiculous and pitiable. But the misfortune is not confined to themselves; for though their magnificent appearance gained no credit with their superiors, yet it caused them to be trusted by their inferiors, by poor tradesmen, who supplied them with many articles, both necessary and superfluous, in the hope of serving themselves and feeding their families. These are usually great sufferers; for being poor and of little consequence, they stand the worst chance of having their demands satisfied. The debts

of honour, and the expenses of fashion, must first be paid; but the butcher, the baker, and the brewer, may come in perhaps for six-pence in the pound, when their customers are gone abroad to live genteelly at Lisle or Brussels.

To make that appearance which our rank requires, provided our purse can pay the expense, argues a proper spirit. But it is surely folly, as well as wrong and robbery, in pursuit of a phantom, to expend on luxury and vanity the property of those who, in the course of their honest callings, have given us confidence, and intrusted us with what was necessary to our subsistence, or what we considered as conducive to our pleasure and prosperity.

Children brought up to expenses and habits which they cannot support, often rue the folly of parents, who, catching at the shadow of honour or wealth, let go the substance, their own happy and independent competency.

Evening LXXIII.

On Diffidence in Boys.

I was once visiting in a family at Christmas, when the eldest son, a fine boy about twelve years old, came home from school for the holidays. As he entered the parlour, which was full of company, instead of paying his compliments to them with the ease and sufficiency of a master of the ceremonies, he hung down his head, blushed violently, and seemed lost in confusion.

"Good God!" exclaimed his mother, "I shall never be able to endure this. Is this the education of Mr. Classic's school? I do insist upon it, my dear, (turning to her husband) that Henry shall go no more to a school where, after three years, he has not learned how to make his entrance into a room with tolerable decency! What will become of my poor child! I shall be ashamed of him—a disgrace, a downright disgrace to the family!"

The boy's confusion, it may readily be conceived, was not diminished by this passionate and unmotherly reception. He burst into tears, and was immediately ordered to leave the room. After a few remarks on the awkwardness of schoolboys, the company sat down to whist, and poor Henry was sent to bed.

I had an opportunity very soon after of inquiring into the character of the boy, and I found, that so far from being stupid, as supposed by his mother, he was the very best scholar in his class, and had already written one or two pretty copies of Latin verses in the style of Tibullus.

As I am as fond of making experiments in morals, as a natural philosopher is in pneumatics, hydrostatics, or chemistry, I determined to watch the progress of the boy, and to see whether he was likely to become, as his relations hastily concluded, an awkward and stupid man. I found he continued to improve in every accomplishment at his school, for his removal from it was over-ruled by the advice of a sensible clergyman, who had great influence in the family. He went to the university with a great character, which he supported, and is now a very polite gentleman, an excellent scholar, and a most respectable man.

This event led me to lament the prevalence of an idea, that modesty, diffidence, or bashfulness in boys is a sign of stupidity, and on all accounts ought to be removed as soon as possible.

The finest rose that ever exhaled fragrance and expanded beauty, was once a rosebud; and had the bud been torn open with violence in its state of immaturity, would it ever have become a beautiful and perfect flower?

Nature, in a state of imperfection, is not ashamed of blushing. She is conscious of her imbecility, and not afraid to own her diffidence; and, while she labours to supply her defects, conceives none to be disgraceful that are unavoidable. Prudence suggests the caution, that we should beware of disturbing nature in her own process, which was undoubtedly prescribed by the God of nature.

That fine sensibility which causes an efflorescence in the cheek of the schoolboy is, I think, a favourable presage of every thing amiable; while that early ripeness which displays a manliness of behaviour at the infantine age, is, like every thing premature, of short continuance, and of little solidity.

But fashionable parents are disgusted with manners in their children dissimilar to their own. They are all ease and familiarity. As to diffidence and blushing, some of them had rather be convicted of an atrocious crime. But their children blush and appear awkward in a circle of polite company, that is, of company formed upon the model which happens to be the reigning taste among the rich and idle. "Take the boy," they exclaim, "from his books and from his masters, if he is thus awkward; for there is no tolerating such an unlicked cub in one's presence."

"Have patience," I would take the liberty of saying, "the bud will expand in due time, and fruit will appear; but if you touch the bloom, in order to force it open before its time, it is very likely that you destroy the possibility of fruit."

Diffidence wears off when the mind becomes conscious of a sufficient degree of strength to support confidence. With respect to confidence without merit to support it, though often valued in the world, and particularly in the law, I hold it in great dishonour. It may push its way to employment and opulence, but it is scarcely consistent with a good mind; and without a good mind what happiness is to be found in employment and opulence? The vessel must be pure, or the ingredients, however fine, will be corrupted.

People, who value themselves on knowing the world, are very apt to insist on effrontery as a necessary virtue to go through the world with success, or rather to recommend it as the substitute and succedaneum of every virtue. But I never hear these persons boasting of their knowledge of the world, and the value of worldly wisdom, but I think of some passages in Scripture, in which they are not held

in so high estimation—"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." But it should be remembered, that the wisdom is not that which is from above, but that of the serpent, that of the accursed spirits, originating and terminating in evil under the fair semblance of good.

EVENING LXXIV.

On the Inferiority of the Compositions of some Persons to their Conversation, and vice versâ.

I HAVE seen men remarkably lively and well informed in conversation appear to great disadvantage on committing their thoughts to paper; and others, who wrote learnedly, elegantly, politely, and acutely, so dull, and apparently so weak in conversation, as to be considered as very unpleasant and uninstructive companions. And I have observed this so often, as to be led to think, what may appear paradoxical, that a genius for writing and a genius for talking, are different in their nature.

It appears to me that superficial men talk most fluently, and, in mixed companies, most agreeably.

They are usually gay and cheerful, for their spirits are not exhausted by deep thought, nor drawn from the things before them by absence. But gaiety and cheerfulness give them, in the convivial hour, a grace which the profound scholar, who utters his thoughts with gravity and hesitation, can seldom display.

A man of a superficial mind and little genius has no diffidence arising from those delicacies and sensibilities which often cruelly distress men of real ability. What he thinks, or has read, or heard, he utters with the confidence of an oracle; ignorant of objections, and fearless of mistake. His confidence gives him credit. The company is always disposed to listen with attention, when any man speaks with the assurance of undoubting conviction. Attention gives him additional spirits, and he begins to claim

the greatest share of conversation as his right, and at length overpowers with volubility and emphasis the silent or gentle diffidence of modest merit.

Ignorant and superficial admirers, finding a voluble speaker just calculated for the meridian of their understandings, are highly delighted with him as a companion, and cry him up as a prodigy of parts and abilities.

Their voices uniting in his favour procure him, perhaps, some professional or official employment in which composition may be necessary. He writes; and the wonder is no more. How are the mighty fallen! *Quantum mutatus!* "Alas, how changed!"

Applauded in the circles of a tavern club, he ventures to publish. A fatal venture! for he who appeared, in conversation, a giant, becomes, when approached in the closet, a pygmy or a Lilliputian.

I wish to prevent the hasty formation of an idea of a man's intellectual talents or genius, solely from his pleasantness or vivacity as a companion. Constant experience proves it to be a fallacious criterion. Men of great thought, solid judgement, and well digested learning, are able indeed to speak to great advantage on great occasions; but they are not sufficiently interested in trifling or ordinary company; and without pride, or any intention to slight, naturally retreat from nonsense and levity to the pleasant indulgence of their own contemplation; therefore they say but little in such company, and that little often from civility, rather than because they are struck with what passes, or impelled to speak by the interesting nature of the question, or the manner in which it is discussed. In the mean time a feather will tickle and excite a fool.

It is wrong therefore, I conclude, to form a decisive opinion of a man's professional abilities from

what appears in common conversation. The only true criterion is the exercise of those abilities in some act of his profession. Judge of the companion in company; but of the lawyer's abilities at the Bar, or from his written opinion; of the clergyman's from the pulpit, or the press; of the physician's from the repeated success of actual practice; judge of the merchant from his punctuality and payments, from his behaviour and appearance at the Royal Exchange, and not from his volubility at a Mansion-house feast, nor even on the hustings, and in the council-chamber of Guildhall.

It is an erroneous judgement which is often formed of children as well as men, when those are supposed to have the best parts who talk most. Excessive garrulity is certainly incompatible with solid thinking, and a mark of that volatile and superficial turn, which, dwelling upon the surfaces of things, never penetrates deeply enough to make any valuable discoveries. But as no rule is without exceptions, some great thinkers, it must be confessed, have been also great talkers.

No one man can unite in himself every excellence. He who excells as a pleasant and lively companion, may be deficient in judgement, in accuracy, in a power of attention and labour; and he who excells in these, may want the versatility, the gaiety, the cheerfulness, which are necessary to render the communication of ideas, in a mixed society, agreeable. Men associate, in the convivial hour of leisure from their professional or commercial employment, more for the sake of passing their time with ease, and even mirth, than of being improved or lessoned by the sage remarks of grave and austere philosophy.

Addison, who could write so agreeably on all subjects, was not an entertaining companion, unless the

circle was select. Samuel Johnson loved company, because he found himself attended to in it, as an oracle of taste and wisdom; but he could not be said to possess companionable *agrément*. His character ensured him respect, previously to his speaking, and what he said justified it; for it was original and solid; his authoritative tone and manner compelled acquiescence, even if conviction was not produced; but, after all, he was not what the world calls a pleasant companion. I could mention some of his contemporaries of far inferior merit, and more circumscribed reputation, who diffused joy and information wherever they went, and were beloved at the same time that they were admired. They also have written books: but their books are not to be compared to Johnson's. Their books were forgotten or despised, even while their conversation was sought and enjoyed by all ranks of people.

But as universal excellence is desirable, it seems right that men should labour to supply every defect; and therefore I wish writers to cultivate the art and habit of conversation; and talkers, on the other hand, to obtain the solidity and accuracy of writers; and thus the advantage derived to hearers and readers will be augmented.

Evening LXXV.

Life. An Allegorical Vision.

A gentle ascent led to a lofty eminence, and on the summit was a level plain of no great extent. The boundaries of it could not indeed easily be ascertained; for as the ascent, on one side, was easy and gradual; so the slope on the other continued almost imperceptible, till it terminated at once in abrupt declivity.

At the first entrance of the hill, I observed great numbers of infants crawling on beds of primroses, or sleeping on pillows formed by the moss. They frequently smiled, and their sweet countenances seemed to express a complacency and joy in the consciousness of their new existence. Many indeed wept and wailed; but their sorrow, though pungent, was short, and the sight of a pretty leaf or flower would cause a smile in the midst of their tears; so that nothing was more common than to see two drops trickling down cheeks which were dimpled with smiles. I was so delighted with the scenes of innocence, that I felt an impulse to go and play with the little tribe, when just as I was advancing, I felt a wand gently strike my shoulder, and turning my eyes on one side, I beheld a venerable figure, with a white beard, and in a grey mantle elegantly thrown around him.

"My son," said he, "I see your curiosity is raised, and I will gratify it; but you must not move from this place, which is the most advantageous spot for the contemplation of the scene before you.

"Yon hill is the Hill of Life, a pageant which I

have raised by the magic influence of this wand, to amuse you with an instructive picture.

"The beauteous innocents, whom you see at the foot of the hill, present you with the idea of angels and cherubs, and of such is the kingdom of Heaven. Simplicity and innocence are their amiable qualities, and the more of them they retain in their ascent, the happier and lovelier shall they be during the whole of their journey.

"But raise your eyes a little. You see a lively train intent to learn, under the sage instructors who accompany them, the easiest and safest way of ascending and descending the hill which lies before them. They often run from the side of their guides, and lose themselves among the shrubs that blossom around them. Some give no ear to instruction, and consequently are continually deviating among thorns, thistles, nettles, and brambles. Their errors are at present retrievable, and few fall in the pitfalls with which the hill abounds. Joy illuminates their countenances. Theirs are the ruddy cheek, the sparkling eye, lively spirits, and unwearied activity. They retain a great share of the innocence with which they set out, and therefore they are cheerful. Enviable age, if reason were mature! But folly, wantonness, frowardness of temper, and ignorance, greatly interrupt and spoil their enjoyments. Fruits of delicious taste grow around them, and flowrets of the sweetest scent and most beautiful colour spring beneath their feet. But they soon grow tired of this lower part of the hill, and ambitiously aspire at higher eminences.

"Behold them a few paces higher. They advance with eagerness, and many of them forsake the guides which have conducted them thus far in their ascent. They hasten in their course, nor do they adhere to

the direct road, but deviate without scruple. Some indeed return; but the greater part climb the hill, by paths of their own choice, full of difficulty and danger. The pitfalls, which are placed in every part of the hill, are here very numerous, and not easily to be avoided by those who forsake the high road. There are indeed no parts of the hill, in which a guide is more necessary than here; nor any in which the travellers are less inclined to seek his assistance.

"You see the beauty of the blossoms. You hear the music of the birds. All nature seems to conspire in affording delight; but too many of the travellers preserve not that innocence and simplicity which are necessary to give a taste for the pleasures which are allowed. Instead of plucking the flowers which are known to be safe and salutary, they desire none but such as are poisonous. The aspiring ardour of the travellers urges them to continue the ascent, and by this time, you see, they have reached the level summit, where you observe a prodigious crowd, all busy in pursuit of their several objects. Their faces are clouded with care, and in the eagerness of pursuit they neglect those pleasures which lie before them. Most of them have now lost a great share of their original innocence and simplicity, and many of them have lost it entirely.

"And now they begin to descend. Their cheerfulness and alacrity are greatly abated. Many limp, and some already crawl. The numbers diminish almost every step; for the pitfalls are multiplied on this side of the hill, and many of the travellers have neither strength nor sagacity to avoid them. Delightful scenes still remain. Fruit in great abundance grows around them. But the greater part, you may remark, are careless of the obvious and natural

pleasures, which they might reach and enjoy, and are eagerly digging in the earth for yellow dust, on which they have placed an imaginary value. Behold one who has just procured a load of it, under which he is ready to sink. He totters along in haste to find a hiding-place for it: but before he has found it, himself is hidden from our eyes, for lo! while I speak, he is dropping into a pitfall. Most of his companions will follow him; but you see no one is alarmed by the example. The descent is become very steep and abrupt, and few there are who will reach the bottom of the hill. Of those few not one advances without stumbling on the edge of the pitfalls, from which he can scarcely recover his feeble foot. Ah! while I speak, they are all gone!"

"And is this a picture of life?" said I, "Alas! how little do the possessors of it seem to enjoy it! Surely some error must infatuate them all. O say, what it is, that I may avoid it, and be happy."

"My son," said my benevolent guide, "do not hastily form an opinion derogatory from the value of life. It is a glorious opportunity afforded by the Creator for the acquisition of happiness. Cast your eyes on yonder plain, which lies at the bottom of the hill, and view the horizon."

I looked, and lo! a cloud tinged with purple and gold, parted in the centre, and displayed a scene at which my eyes were dazzled. I closed them awhile to recover the power of vision, and when I opened them, I saw a figure of a person in whom majesty and benevolence were awfully united. He sat on a throne with every appearance of triumph, and at his feet lay a cross. And I heard a voice saying, "Come again, ye children of men." And lo, the plain opened in more places than I could number, and myriads of myriads started into existence, with

bodies beautiful and glorious. And the voice proceeded, "In my Father's house are many mansions. Ye have all fallen short of the perfection for which ye were created; but some have been less unprofitable servants than others, and to them are allotted the more exalted places of bliss; but there remain mansions appropriated to all the sons of men. I have redeemed the very worst of them from the tyranny of death. Rise therefore to your respective mansions. Enter into the joy of your Lord." He said; when the sound of instruments sweeter than the unpurged ear ever heard, rang throughout heaven's concave. And the glorified bodies beneath rose like the sun in the east, and took their places in the several planets which form what is called our solar system. I was transported with the sight, and was going to fall on my knees, and supplicate to be admitted among the aspiring spirits, when, to my mortification, I thought I was suddenly placed on the side of the hill, where I had to climb a steep ascent. I wept bitterly, when my guide remonstrated with me on the unreasonableness of my tears, since none were to be admitted to glory who had not travelled the journey which I had seen so many others travel. "Keep innocence," said he, "do justice, walk humbly." He said no more, but, preparing to depart, touched me with his rod, and I awoke.

Evening LXXVI.

On bringing up dull Boys, in preference to others, to the Church.

Επιστημη Επιστημων. Nazianzen.
Ex quovis ligno fit Mercurius. Hor.

If there happen to be a boy in a family unlikely, from deficiency of parts, to make his way in the world, he is commonly selected by his prudent parents for the church; but the idea that little more is requisite to form a clergyman than a black coat and a good living, is so dishonourable to the religious establishment, that I shall think myself very properly employed in controverting its truth.

I acknowledge, that honesty without learning and abilities, is a better qualification for the sacred profession, than learning and abilities without honesty: but I contend, that they are all three indispensably necessary, in every one who enters the profession with ideas superior to those of an ensign when he obtains a pair of colours, or a midshipman when he procures a commission; or indeed of a tradesman when he hires a shop, or of a mechanic and labourer when they undertake a job with no other view than to earn the hire.

If, indeed, a man is awkward and unskilful in the practice of a mechanical art, few or none employ him, and himself alone is the only sufferer; but it happens in the church, that he who has neither learning nor abilities, often has the most money, with which himself or his friends purchase an ecclesiastical employment; and they who are immediately concerned in the manner in which he acquits

himself in it, have it not in their power to eject him for disability, or to find convenient opportunities of supplying his defects by having recourse to a substitute. They must be contented to be instructed by his precept and example; for, however deficient and erroneous, these are the best they can procure in the legal and regular course.

But if the care of a parish, and that a very large one, be a most important charge, if the moral and spiritual safety of thousands depend on the clergyman's exertions, surely it is criminal in parents to select the least able and promising among their children to fill this office.

But I know it will be urged, and with great appearance of reason, that in this age, when printed sermons abound, it is easy to select proper ones, without danger of detection; and that, if the clergyman reads them and the prayers audibly and distinctly in the church, and maintains a decent character out of it, he is a no less useful and accomplished parish priest, than if he had the learning and abilities of a Clarke, a Tillotson, a Sherlock, a Secker, or a Jortin.

It is very true, that by reading the pious discourses of others properly, he may do much good; but is it likely that he will read them properly, if he is unable to write any himself, that he will enter into the spirit of them, that he will feel and communicate the holy flame of fervent yet rational devotion? And with respect to his maintaining a decent character out of church; if he does so, he is so far to be honoured; but if he is destitute of clerical accomplishments, of a taste for books, and a love of learning, there is danger that, from want of proper and professional employment, he will not maintain that decency of character. Having nothing to

do but merely to read in the church, he will be idle; and idleness affords many temptations to violate decency of character. Is it not likely, that he may commence a beau, a man of fashion, a man of pleasure, a gamester, a drunkard, or a horse-dealer? When there is no natural turn for the profession in which a man is placed, and no acquired talents to render him satisfied with himself in the exercise of it, there is great danger of his having recourse to something, either as an employment or a recreation, very foreign to the decency of character which his profession requires him to support.

But, after all, is mere decency of character sufficient in the teacher of a whole parish, in the comforter of the sick, in the guide to heaven? Decency of character is supported by all his more respectable parishioners, by tradesmen, by mechanics, by servants. Something more is reasonably expected of him who supports the *persona ecclesiæ*, who was anciently called, as an appellation of respect, the PARSON, and who still has the epithet *reverend** prefixed to his name, as appropriated to his professional character.

He should support a dignity of character as well as a decency. But no artifice, no external pomp will support it. It must support itself by real superiority. But what superiority is naturally expected as a prime requisite in a public instructor? Is it not superior knowledge of those things in which he undertakes to give instruction? But can this superior knowledge be acquired without application? And is it likely, that he who was selected by his parent for the church, because he was a DUNCE, should

* Cui mens divinior, atque os
Magna sonaturum, des nominis hujus honorem. HOR.

apply at all, or, if he should, that he should apply with success?

A man, who finds himself in a profession for which he is conscious of his being unqualified, feels himself uneasy. He seeks refuge in amusements unbecoming his profession; and I have no doubt but that it is one reason why many clergymen are seen to take delight in unclerical occupations, that they are selected for a learned profession, without any propensity to learning, and perhaps because they were supposed to be dull of apprehension, and unfit for any thing else.

Nothing is more common, in some places, than to see clergymen devoting the greatest part of their time to hounds and horses, dressing in the extremity of the jockey's or sportsman's prevailing fashion, taking the lead or acting as masters of the ceremonies at assemblies, conspicuously active at horse-races, excessively attached to cards and back-gammon, and foremost in every thing which the more serious part of their congregation considers as vanity.

They may certainly amuse themselves with several of these things, and at the same time be very worthy men; but yet, as these things have an appearance of levity, and lead them to associate with loose and profligate characters, they give offence, and prevent them from doing that good for which alone their profession was instituted. No good can be done by a preacher totally destitute of authority; but authority is founded on opinion, and nothing, except vice, destroys that opinion so effectually as the appearance of levity.

Though moderate abilities and moderate attainments, with a good heart and a decent character, may make a very valuable parish-priest, yet I can

never allow, that the study of divinity, as some seem to insinuate, requires only moderate abilities and attainments. It certainly affords scope for the greatest talents, and when intended to be carried to any considerable degree of perfection, it requires also profound and extensive erudition.

To be a Christian philosopher, a physician of the soul, it is necessary, in the first place, to have studied the Holy Scriptures with great attention; and in the second, that wonderful microcosm, the heart of man. As anatomy is necessary to the surgeon, so is the knowledge of the passions, the temper, the propensities, and the alterations which age, prosperity, and adversity, effect in the mind, necessary to him, whose office it is to reduce those who have erred, to afford rational comfort to the afflicted, and hope to the desperate. That he may enforce the doctrines of religion, he must be an orator; he must be furnished with polite learning, and with elegant diction; he must have every assistance which a liberal education can bestow, and which long and attentive reading can obtain. And shall a parent think himself justified in selecting the weakest of his children for an office so important? He who acts so unreasonably, probably renders the child unhappy, while he insults the national religion, and that God whom it was established to honour.

If the parent thinks he perceives in any of his boys a remarkable share of abilities, he resolves to bring him up to the law, and all his worldly-wise friends commend him for not throwing away so fine a boy by placing him in the church. Yet I am fully convinced, that no department of the law requires the noble faculties of the mind in so great perfection as the pastoral office. The law chiefly requires AUDACITY AND SOPHISTRY, to both of which the church

is greatly superior. The law requires the little wisdom of this world, the wisdom of those children of the world, who are wiser in their generation than the children of light: but divinity towers above such meanness, above lawyers and their subtleties, above every other profession; for to be a divine, properly and fully accomplished, is to be all that philosophy can give, with the addition of the purest and sublimest religion.

It would afford me much satisfaction if any thing I can say should induce the serious Christian to devote the very best of his children to the service of the God who gave them *; and not impiously to consecrate him to the service of the altar, whom, from want of parts, he thinks incapable of any useful service. I suspect that man to be insincere in his profession of Christianity who dares to insult it so grossly.

It is to be wished that the patronage of livings were chiefly, if not entirely, in the bishops, supposing *translation* prohibited; for private patronage, in the present age and system of principles and manners, is highly injurious to the cause of Christianity. The bishops might sometimes be misled in conferring benefices, by gratitude to their patrons; but I am sure they would, for the most part, dispose of the cure of souls far better than esquires, who consider the living in their gift as a mere provision for some lubberly boy educated as a fox-hunter; or who, in default of a younger son, put it up to sale, and knock it down with the hammer, like lands, tenements, goods, and chattels.

Nothing surely conduces to injure Christianity so much as a contemptible ministry; and it must of ne-

* Yet while BOROUGH-INTEREST is the only means of obtaining preferment in the church, there is little to encourage prudent parents.

cessity be partially contemptible, when many parishes in a kingdom can exhibit individuals among the laity, more learned and more decent than the parochial priest, their authorized guide, whom they pay, and whom they ought to revere. The misfortune originates in great measure from the mistaken but prevailing idea, which I have here endeavoured to explode, "that any thing is good enough to make a parson." INTEREST, and a friend at court, are thought sufficient to supply all defect.

Evening LXXVII.

On the peculiar Happiness supposed to attend a Life of Contemplation.

"I no sooner enter my library," says Heinsius, "than I bolt the door, and shut out lust, ambition, and avarice, whose mother is idleness, and whose nurse, ignorance; and taking my seat among the illustrious spirits around me, I look down with pity on the rich and great, who are strangers to such refined and exalted enjoyments."

If a life of study can produce happiness so pure as Heinsius has described; if it can exclude lust, ambition, and avarice; if it can give an elevation above the rich and great; who would not fly from the world and seize that CHIEF GOOD, in the recess of his library, which he has vainly toiled for in the road of ambition and avarice?

But no recess is sufficiently retired, no occupation sufficiently pure, to exclude care and contamination. Man bears within his bosom, wheresoever he conceals himself, and whatsoever he does, the seeds of evil and misery.

Philosophers may describe the happiness of contemplative life, and students flatter themselves that they are out of the reach of corruption; but does experience justify a persuasion that philosophers and students are happier and more innocent than all others? A perusal of their lives will evince the truth, that it is not in man to secure himself from the assaults of passion, and the corruption of vice, by withdrawing his person from the society of the multitude. Volumes have been written on the peculiar misery

of the learned; and I wish it could be asserted with truth, that on shutting the doors of their book-rooms, they at the same time shut out desire, avarice, and ambition.

Men of that activity of mind which ranges through all nature and art, see more clearly, and feel more sensibly, than the common tribe whose attention is fixed on frivolity. All the objects of desire, avarice, and ambition, exhibit themselves to their eyes, in the most glowing colours, and in the most engaging forms. Their taste, cultivated and refined by continual exercise of its powers, is enabled to discover charms which escape vulgar notice. Their leisure, and freedom from the ordinary cares of life, cause their hearts to fix on what their imaginations have admired. It cannot be wondered at, therefore, if contemplative men, instead of being exempt from the tumults which disturb others, have felt themselves agitated by external things with peculiar force. Their enjoyments have been high, their sufferings keen, and their failings singularly deplorable.

I fear, therefore, that truth must resign those pretensions to that unmolested felicity, which students have sometimes claimed as the privilege of their learned solitude. In common with all the sons of men they partake of misery; and they are under some peculiar circumstances, which aggravate the woe which it is their destiny to share.

To secure the happiness that is allowed to man, they must, like others, have recourse to virtue and wisdom, not merely to retreat, or to contemplation. With virtue and wisdom, I believe, their employments will be found highly conducive to a most exalted state of sublunary felicity; for their employments are pure and refined, intellectual, and even heavenly, compared with the gross delights of animal

sense. He who places his happiness in gluttony and debauchery, must acknowledge, while he boasts of his pleasures, that he is renouncing the most honourable part of his nature, his reason; and that he is assimilating himself, as much as he is able, with the brutes whom he proudly disdains.

I cannot help thinking, that the Platonic philosophy, mixed as it is with much folly, deserves more regard than it usually receives. It tends to make man value himself on his MIND. It teaches to seek enjoyment in the exertions of the discursive faculty, and to aspire at an intellectual excellence, which though it may never reach, invites, by its beautiful appearance, to heights of improvements which it would never otherwise have attained. Platonism, when carried to extremes, like all other doctrines, terminates in nonsense; but under the regulation of reason, it leads the mind to a state of celestial enjoyment and angelic perfection.

Happy would it have been for the contemplative part of mankind, if the honours which are almost universally allowed to Epicurus had been reserved for Plato. Christian and rational Platonism leads to the perfection of the human soul: nor should the scrupulous be ashamed of uniting with christianity, a philosophy which, in its nature and tendency, when its extremes are avoided, is all pure, all spiritual, all divine.

If the superior light of Christianity had not irradiated the world, there is no philosophy which the aspirant after excellence would wish to prevail in preference to Platonism divested of its visionary eccentricities. No philosophy contributes so much to raise man to the exaltation which he may conceive to adorn a spiritual nature.* No philosophy exalts him so much above the body, and furnishes

him with ideas so congenial to all that we consider as celestial.

But common sense, and common experience, affirm, after all, that whoever attempts to reach undisturbed happiness by flights of contemplation above the usual ken of mortals, commonly finds himself precipitated at last, like Icarus in the fable.

Superior degrees of happiness are not to be expected solely from a skill in arts and sciences, from study, and from retirement; but chiefly from those virtues, and good qualities, in which even the illiterate find it, from prudence, temperance, justice, fortitude, and contentment. The boast of felicity without these is but the rant of pride, and the rhapsody of inexperienced speculation.

Evening LXXVIII.

On the Amusement of public Readings.

There is a species of entertainment lately introduced, which, being in its nature elegant, in its satisfactions innocently pleasurable, and in its consequences highly improving, deserves great praise and general encouragement: I mean the public reading of excellent passages from the best authors, varied at intervals by the performance of the best music. The understanding, the ear, the judgement, and the fancy, are all agreeably addressed, exercised, and improved by it; and the politest ages and nations cannot boast a more refined and rational mode than this, of amusing the inhabitants of a great metropolis.

Recitations were a very common amusement among the ancients; but the ancients do not appear to have always added to the charms of verse the melody of instrumental music. Their recitations constituted their mode of publishing a new piece. The press being unknown, and the methods of writing then in use tardy and expensive, the poet published his work, in the first instance, by assembling his friends, and reading his production before them, sometimes for their correction, but oftener for their applause.

These recitations became at last a public nuisance. Poets made interest with as much solicitude as a candidate, for the honour of an audience. They sometimes paid persons for attendance, that, by an appearance of numbers, they might gain the credit of popularity. It must have been greatly mortifying to vanity to hear the excuses which were made by

those who wished to avoid the tedious attendance. No common degree of self-love could have borne them. But the desire of applause originated sometimes in passions more clamorous than vanity, in avarice and ambition. The arts of puffing were practised for their gratification. Hearers were hired at a considerable expense, and placed in commodious corners of the room, to applaud at such places in the poem, as had been previously appointed by the speaker. Complaisance or servility often gave the palm where it was not due. Poetical like civil eminence was sought by bribery and corruption, and at last the public recitations became objects of supreme contempt, and were in course relinquished.

But the modern readings, not consisting of original compositions produced by the speaker, are not liable to those evils which the corruption of human nature has always a tendency to introduce. The pieces recited are usually such as have already received the stamp of public approbation. The manner of recital is alone left to the judgement of the audience. If the reader murders his authors, the audience will very justly pronounce sentence of condemnation against him; for, as they pay for their admission, they have a right to demand a competent degree of excellence in the performance; and, if their decision should be over-ruled by sinister arts, they can easily punish the delinquent by withdrawing their presence from an entertainment which, under bad management, ceases to afford them that pleasure which they have a right to expect.

Many improvements might be made in this mode of entertainment, which the public seems not disinclined to favour. It has hitherto been in the hands of second or third rate players, of persons of no great repute, very moderately learned, and not strikingly

endowed with the talents of elocution. There is surely nothing base or disgraceful in the undertaking, nothing to deter persons of the greatest abilities, learning, and character, from engaging in it. On the contrary, as the recital of the best compositions, in the best manner, requires and displays great taste, great judgement, great eloquence, he who performs it well, deserves, and will probably receive, honour as well as emolument for his reward. Men of the most liberal education might here find a field for the display of their abilities, with great advantage both pecuniary and reputable. It is certain, that the entertainment of readings will never possess the esteem which it deserves, till it shall be conducted by persons of character, by gentlemen and scholars, at whose feet the learned and the great may sit and listen without degradation.

If this entertainment should ever be undertaken by such men, it might be worth while to erect a theatre adapted to their purpose. It should, I think, be in the form of the ancient Odeum, with a stage or pulpit, and an orchestra for the musicians. A library might be added for the use of constant subscribers; and a grove or garden might furnish a fine opportunity for a philosophical or literary promenade.

The expense attending such an institution would perhaps exceed the revenues. The plan may be visionary, like Cowley's projected college; but as this is an enterprising age, such improvements and modifications of it might be adopted, as would render it in some degree practicable.

In every mode of entertainment intended for the public, there must be such a variety as may contribute to the pleasure of a mixed assembly. It seldom happens that all are sufficiently rational to be satis-

fled with the feast of reason. Music is the best addition that can be made to it. After every recital, an interlude should be introduced, the expression of which should in some degree correspond with the piece which may have been just read; grave or gay, according to the gravity or gaiety of the poetry or prose. Care, however, should be taken to preserve the entertainment distinct from the drama. If it encroaches on the theatrical, it may probably appear, from the want of mechanical decorations, inferior to it, and gradually fall into contempt.

Not but that I believe many persons would listen to a good tragedy or comedy, well read by one person, with more pleasure than they behold it meretriciously drest out with the tricks of the theatre. Fine dresses, painted faces, and gaudy scenes soon pall upon a sensible mind, which is disagreeably diverted by them from attending to the main business, the merits and beauties of the poem. The finery of a theatre has few charms, but for the illiterate and for children. In the mean time, good poetry, solid reasoning, historical truth, true eloquence, gracefully and properly exhibited at the readings, must always supply the mind with aliment at once pleasant and nutritious.

EVENING LXXIX.

On falling into the Indolence of Old Age prematurely.

THERE prevails an opinion, that, after a certain age, the mind, like the body, having arrived at its complete size, ceases to admit of that increase which we call improvement. Many appearances seem to justify such an opinion: but I am inclined to believe, that, though the mind at a certain age may, from several causes, shew a tendency to become stationary, yet its tendency may be counteracted by extraordinary efforts and exertion. The machine, by long operation, may have incurred the impediments of excessive friction, or some of the wheels may be nearly worn out: but a little oil judiciously applied, and a few repairs ingeniously made, may restore its motions and augment its force.

One considerable proof, that, when the mind has reached the zone of its improvement, it becomes for a little while stationary, and then retrograde, is drawn from observing that the second or third production of an author is often inferior to his first, even though the first were the produce of his juvenile age.

But is it not probable that the exertions of the author may have been remitted after having obtained the distinction which first stimulated his earlier diligence? Success operates on the minds of many, like the luxuries of Capua on the soldiers of Hannibal after the passage of the Alps, and the victory of Cannæ.

When the strength of the body begins to decline, its companion seems to indulge it with a sympathising indolence. The road that leads to repose is

smooth, flowery, and seducing; and many there are who enter it, long before repose is necessary. If they could acquire self-command enough to avoid the charms of the syren, they might still make great advances in climbing the steeps of science and virtue. But it must be allowed that greater efforts are required than the generality of mankind are disposed to make, at any time in their lives, and much less in the period of their decline.

Yet the history of literature affords many animating examples, to prove that great works may be produced after the middle of life. Sophocles and Theophrastus composed excellent works when they were nearly a hundred years old. Our own Milton, whose Paradise Lost is an effort of mental activity equal to any which antiquity can boast, did not begin it till he had arrived at that age when, in the opinion of many, the mind is receding from excellence.

Julius Cæsar Scaliger, who became a prodigy of learning, did not commence the study of Greek till he was nearly forty. He did not even know the Greek characters till about that time; nor did he devote himself entirely to a life of letters till he was forty-seven. His days till then had been spent in an unsettled manner, chiefly in the army, with habits and dispositions unfavourable to study. But he had a mind which, like that of his namesake, the Roman conqueror, was formed to break down all obstacles; and age, instead of abating his vigour, served but to harden and corroborate the sinews of his intellect.

It seems indeed reasonable to suppose, that works which depend on the warmth and vigour of the imagination, on pathos and sensibility of heart, would always be produced in the greatest perfection at an early period; but the examples of Sophocles and Milton, who wrote the finest poetry, the one in ex-

treme old age, and the other at a mature age, serve to prove that theories concerning the human mind are too fallacious to be entirely relied on. The defects and failures of nature may be in great measure supplied or prevented by prudence and perseverance. But laziness and want of spirit suffer them to creep on before nature intended.

Thus is life in effect abbreviated. Early old age and early dotage are introduced by an abject dereliction of our own powers. We labour to increase our fortunes, and suffer our faculties to run to ruin without reluctance. But it is surely worth while to contend strenuously for their preservation. Of how little value are the enjoyments of life, when we come to vegetate in stupidity, in the midst of all that should delight our senses, inform our understanding, enrich our memory, and glitter on our imagination! It is worth while to pursue every method which has a tendency to prolong our mental existence. Among these I will venture to enumerate, a constant yet moderate exercise of our abilities, a daily accumulation of new ideas, a recollection of the old, a rule over the passions, a temperance in wine and all the pleasures of the glutton and debauchee. We often accuse time and nature for decays which are caused by our own neglect. Instead of immerging ourselves in the pursuit of wealth, which we shall never enjoy, and honours, which are empty bubbles, let our desire be to preserve our faculties unimpaired to the last, and to shine as the sun shines, bright through the whole of its progress; and though with abated heat and effulgence at the close of it, yet with a serene and venerable lustre, till it descends to the other hemisphere.

Evening LXXX.

On the Effect of literary Prizes and Foundations for Lectures.

Many men of generous minds, lovers of learning and desirous of promoting it, have established premiums and pensions to excite exertion, and to allure modest merit from the shade. The rewards have been ample, the honours splendid; but the works, which they have elicited, have not often exceeded the narrow limits of mediocrity.

What is there in our libraries produced in consequence of prizes, or public foundations, which claims the first rank, and aspires at immortality? The Miltons, the Shakespeares, the Bacons, the Newtons, and the Lockes, rose, like the forest tree, with spontaneous vigour.

The failure of prizes and other similar institutions to call forth extraordinary and super-eminent merit, is a curious circumstance in the world of letters, and deserves investigation.

Excitements of this kind operate on two very strong propensities of human nature, the love of money and the love of fame. Rivalry and competition add a powerful spur to the minds of all men; and are particularly efficacious among the candidates for public distinction: but notwithstanding a theoretical probability, that such invitations would produce uncommon excellence, the fact will be uncontroverted, that they have produced only a moderate degree.

It may not be difficult to assign some causes of the failure. The mind of man delighting in liberty, usu-

ally enters on a subject proposed by another with a frigid and forced attention. It feels its powers shackled by authority. It moves in chains, and therefore with difficulty. It is made to resemble a stream diverted from its natural channel into a canal of the inland navigator. The beautiful meanders disappear and are changed to a long right line confined by regular banks, unadorned by spontaneous flowers, willows, and alders, the wild yet inimitable graces of nature.

Uncertainty of success, where a splendid prize excites a number of competitors, throws a damp on the spirits, or teaches a cold caution very unfavourable to the noble flights of aspiring genius. It represses those hardy attempts at high excellence which approach to the very verge of a precipice. It causes a solicitude rather to avoid error, than aspire at pre-eminent beauty. A correct composition is the result, where there is nothing to blame, and nothing to commend. The treatise is very fine, says the reader; but take it away and bring me Shakespeare.

True genius, indeed, does not often engage in competitions excited by gold medals. There is an independent spirit in true genius, a noble pride, and a generous self-esteem, which prevent it from entering the lists, where the prize is oftener conferred on performances without faults, than on striking but unequal excellence. Pecuniary rewards seldom appear alluring to true genius; and the distinction, which the obtaining of a paltry prize, against no very distinguished competitors, confers, is too little to rouse the vigour of gigantic powers. The eagle and the lion stoop not to a mean prey. Nothing less than public fame, universal applause, independently of a bauble, or a purse of guineas, can satisfy minds elevated by nature above the common standard of human ability.

Of those who have gained prizes many have been truly ingenious; but among them we do not see the names of the Drydens, the Popes, and the Grays. Oblivion has already covered most of them in her impenetrable shade. Their success answered the temporary purpose of recommending them to the patronage or employment of cotemporaries; but where are their boasted productions? I search for them in vain in the booksellers' shops; I find them, if I find them at all, in the bundle of waste paper sold by the pound to the chandlers.

But are prizes useless, and ought they to be discontinued? Certainly not; for they tend to excite a mediocrity of excellence which is found very beneficial among mankind, because it is level to that moderate capacity which is supposed to predominate. They raise moderate abilities to a pitch which they would otherwise have never reached. They serve as whips to the dray-horse, though the racer will run with sufficient speed without them; and, in the generosity of his nature, would indignantly spurn at their application to his side.

Does the establishment of lectures, on controversial points in divinity, promote the cause of Christianity? I think, not so much as is sometimes pretended. The effect of arguments is greatly lessened, when an advocate writes for hire on a subject prescribed by authority. He is supposed to write, not so much the result of his own conviction, as the sentiments of a sect, a party, or a church; and to be actuated, not so much by a sincere zeal for the truth and the cause, as by the desire of gain and reputation. He is supposed to enlist as a mercenary, hired, like the Hessians, to draw the sword for pay, and ready, if he could with decency, to lend his abilities to the opposite side, if they would invite him with greater rewards. And who reads the books which

the prizes or lectureships have elicited? A few recluse academics, a few speculative divines. Not the people at large, who require something more popularly written, something with less subtlety and less polemic art, to captivate their attention and convince their understanding. To name particular works or particular writers, though easy, would be tedious; but it would be difficult to point out a single work, among such writings, which has been generally read, or become universally popular, which has silenced the clamour of the infidel, and fixed Christianity on a firmer basis than it stood upon before. They are useful, however, in furnishing exercises for theological students, and employing the time of those who, without such incitements, might have slumbered away their existence in a total inaction.

Perhaps an improvement might be made in the adjudication of literary prizes, and in bestowing the bounty of founders. They might be given as rewards to the best spontaneous work published in the year, in whatever art or science they were originally intended to promote. A committee of judges might be appointed, who should act with the most perfect impartiality. But here would be the difficulty; where shall a tribunal be found among mortals, in which favour and prejudice do not interpose? Not in England; where interest, partiality, party, envy, and malice, have long usurped a dominion in literature, as well as in politics; where 'a friend' in power will supply the want of all 'desert,' and a corrupt vote obtain the 'lucrative cure of souls' and the first prizes in civil and ecclesiastical life.

Evening LXXXI.

On the Imprudence of urging incorrigible Dunces to a learned Profession.

In que eo vel maxime probavi summum illum doctorem, Alabandensem Apollonium, qui, cum mercede doceret, tamen non patiebatur eos, quos judicabat non posse oratores evadere, operam apud sese perdere, et ad quam quemque artem putabat esse aptum, ad eam impellere atque hortari solebat. Satis est enim cæteris artificiis percipiendis, *tantummodo similem esse hominis*, et id quod tradatur, vel etiam inculcetur, siquis forte sit tardior, posse percipere animo, et memoriâ custodire.

Cic. de Orat. lib. i. sect. 28.

SECTION I.

Of the multitudes, who are intended for the liberal professions, and furnished with the opportunities of a liberal education, the majority appears to be endowed with only such a share of natural talents, as enables them to reach a mediocrity of excellence; and many are so little favoured by nature, as to continue, after much labour and time bestowed in vain, utterly incapable of receiving benefit from literary instruction.

The mediocrists, if I may venture to give them that name, constitute the greater part of mankind, and become very useful and respectable members of society. They are found to undergo labour with patience, and to rise, by care and perseverance, to heights of excellence, which even genius, attended with idleness, cannot attain. Their understandings are not bright and shining: but they are strong and solid: and who does not know that the pick-axe and the spade would be in no respect the better for the acuteness of the razor; and that, in ordinary work,

the hammer, the beetle, and the mallet, are as necessary as the keen-edged chisel?

Of the mediocrist I do not at present speak; but of the dunce, of him whom the ancients would have stigmatized with the epithet Bœotian, and of whom they would have said, rather harshly, that his soul was given him only to preserve, like salt, his body from putrefaction *.

Such boys are certainly to be treated with mildness and compassion. Ridiculous as their blunders appear, they ought to be passed over with tacit connivance, or the gentlest reproof. They can no more avoid their stupidity by any efforts of their own, than the blind and deaf can supply the defects of their senses by their own exertion. Their happiness should be consulted by their parents, and by all humane persons who are connected with them; and they should be placed in such situations in life, as may least expose them to contempt, and enable them to act their part with the most decency. The scope of my present attempt is to contribute what can be contributed to their EASE AND THEIR CREDIT. As to their improvement in learning, he, to whom the task of instructing them is allotted, has an employment like the rolling of the rebounding stone, or the filling of the perforated vessel. Pretenders, incited by interested motives, are indeed ready to undertake it with boldness; but honest men, and men of sense, will acknowledge what they cannot but feel, that it is impossible.

I say, it is the duty of parents to consult the 'honour and happiness' of such boys; but whether to

* Animum illi pecudi datum pro sale ne putresceret.
CIC. de Finibus.

Dr. Southh as made use of this idea; see a note on sect. 34 of *Liberal Education*.

place them at a Latin school, and to confine them there ten or twelve years, and then to send them to college seven more, in order to fix them in a pulpit for life, is to consult their 'honour and their happiness,' is a question to be determined by actual experience and observation. It appears to me, that such a plan renders them as 'uneasy' as their dull dispositions are capable of being, and at the same time exposes them to 'insult' and 'ill-usage.'

I will endeavour to describe the three states of such unfortunate boys; at school, at college, and in their profession.

At school, the dunce passes the dreary hours, days, and years, from seven to seventeen, under a restraint which, to him, must have all the horrors of imprisonment; for he has no relish for those employments, no desire for that excellence, the pursuit of which might fill the tedious interval. He sits patiently under the rod and cane, at a form, making dogs' ears to dirty dictionaries. He is the last in his classes, a mere dead weight, the torment of his instructors, and the laughing-stock of his livelier companions. His ears are stunned with reprimands, and his back galled with stripes. He paces along, like the mill-horse, always driven on, but never advancing. The school-room is to him a Bastile or a slave-galley. No bright idea from his books cheers his gloomy way; and if nature had not given him an incrustation of stupidity, like the shell of the oyster, or the tortoise, he would be more wretched than the Negroes of the West Indies groaning under an Egyptian bondage. But if his *ease* is thus secured, it is not so with his 'honour.' He is the standing 'butt' of ridicule, the scorn and outcast of the little society.

At length he is emancipated, not in consequence of his attainments, but his age. Too tall for school,

he is sent to college. There, indeed, he feels himself at liberty; and soon learns to fill up the vacancies, which dogs, horses, and guns leave him, with ale, port, and gentle slumber. He finds no difficulty in procuring from good-natured companions the exercises which are required. He can purchase them of some poor servitor, unless his father has been slack in his remittances. So far well; but there are examinations which must be undergone in person. Here he is miserably exposed; and, if not quite destitute of feeling, wretchedly uneasy from the fear of a disgraceful repulse. After much trouble, he goes through the ordeal by the candour of good-natured judges, who would rather strain a point of conscience, than ruin a young man's interest and expectations; especially as there is a good living purchased for him, that only waits for his acceptance of it. He obtains his degrees and his orders at last; but not without misery and disgrace. Rejoiced at gaining the ultimate object of his education, he mounts his hunter, and turns his back on schools, colleges, libraries, and books, the bane of his happiness, the causes of his dishonour.

He takes possession of his vicarage. He likes the house, the stables, the dog-kennel, the pasture-ground, and the income; but the church and the pulpit are the great drawbacks of his felicity*. He has no inclination for clerical or literary employments. He hates the sight of a book, and would as soon think of shooting his best pointer as composing a sermon. He is strict and rigid in collecting his tithes; but when that business is done, he finds his time an intolerable burden; and knows no method of alleviating it, but in such amusements as give offence to the serious part of his parish. He becomes a kind of game-

* Fundi nostri calamitas. TERENCE.

keeper and huntsman to all the esquires around, acts as master of the ceremonies at all the little balls, and plays so keenly at whist (for dunces often excell at cards), that most people are afraid to sit down with him.

He is not unconscious that he is acting out of character. He perceives that he is not respected as a clergyman, though courted by the lower orders of the fox-hunters as a boon companion. He consoles himself by the consideration, that not himself, but his parents, were blameable, who placed him in a profession most repugnant to his nature and inclinations. He feels himself, as a clergyman, like a fish out of water, a dog taught to dance, or a learned pig.

Had he been fixed in a shop, or in any mode of life where learning is not required, he might have been happy and respectable. He would have made a good brewer, grocer, draper, builder, brazier, pewterer, or plumber, though he is but a sorry divine. In his present situation, he is as unhappy as his blunt feelings will allow him to be; and as to credit and esteem, he is as little respected as the sexton of his parish, or the organ-blower.

I conclude, therefore, that parents, who bring up dunces to the church because they are dunces, do not consult the honour and happiness of their children; but expose them to as much misery as their natures are capable of feeling, and to as much disgrace as can be easily incurred without the commission of a crime.

EVENING LXXXII.

On the Propriety of trying Dunces in some Art unconnected with Letters.

SECTION II.

I HAVE introduced an instance from the clerical profession, principally, because parents, by a most perverse way of thinking, usually bring up a boy to the church whom they consider as scarcely fit for any thing. It is also certain, that dunces educated for the law and physic, when they find themselves unsuccessful at the bar and the bedside, seek an asylum in the pulpit. From both these circumstances, it happens that the church is complimented with those whom the world is supposed to throw aside as refuse. The temple is thus converted into an hospital for incurables.

Dunces at school are, however, by no means to be considered as refuse, though I must contend that they ought not to be particularly consecrated to the service of the altar. No boy, who does not show some taste for the belles lettres, for oratory, poetry, and history, should be brought up to that, or to any of the learned and liberal professions.

But some boys who are dull in the belles lettres, who never could read or relish the classics, have a turn for mathematics, and all the arts which depend on mechanical contrivance. A reputed dunce should be tried in these studies before he is given up as incorrigible. I have been told of a very able man, who, when a boy, displayed no symptoms of parts till he was tried in Euclid's Elements. They struck

him with delight; he studied them with eagerness, grew fond of application, and gradually rose to high eminence as a polite artist.

Others, who make no progress in their books, have a taste for drawing and music. These, indeed, will seldom be sufficient to qualify for employments by which life is to be supported or a fortune acquired; but when a dull boy in books appears to be ingenious in these arts, he ought to be allowed to cultivate them at least as amusements, in order to rescue himself from the imputation of a total want of ability.

It should be considered too, before a boy, who makes little improvement in the classics, is despaired of, that the parts of different boys display themselves at different periods. Many of those who produce fruit of the most durable kind, do not blossom till late in the season.

But yet there are some who show such symptoms of insuperable stupidity in learning, that after a reasonable trial, the limitation of which must be left to the parent's discretion, they ought, as their happiness is valued, to be led to other pursuits in which activity of body is chiefly required.

I have said that the time of trial should be determined by the parent, for few masters will venture to speak unwelcome truth to their employer, especially on a tender subject, which may affect the whole life of their pupil, and perhaps draw down his bitterest resentment upon them at a more efficient age. The office of deciding whether or not a young man shall proceed in a way of life pointed out by prudence and by parental authority, is too important to be imposed on a common master. The compensation he usually receives is not sufficient, and the connection is not close enough to justify the parent in throwing the

odium and the burden upon him. The parent himself, after accurate observation, and the opinion of the master, should remove the boy; but not subject him to the mortification and disgrace of being avowedly removed because he was a dunce. Some prudential reason should be assigned to justify the change of plan, and to save the character of the boy. To punish him for the defects of his nature would be savage cruelty. And here I cannot but observe, that the practice of beating dunces, to make them scholars, is at once egregious folly and most abominable brutality.

Dunces in books often possess an animal vivacity in the affairs and intercourse of common life, which causes vulgar people, both high and low, to consider them as clever. Indeed, as the whole of their attention is devoted to the body, and to present and palpable objects, they sometimes excell greatly in all bodily exercises and accomplishments, and in every mode and degree of Chesterfieldian grace. External ceremony, dress, and address, are just level to the understanding of a dunce. The worst Latinists and Grecians shine the brightest in the fencing- and dancing-school. And it is an astonishing circumstance, that blockheads in books show wonderful acuteness and memory in all the fashionable games of chance. Add to this, that they are fond of the small-talk of the day; so that, with all these recommendations, they are usually received, in fashionable circles, as very clever and agreeable fellows.

The army and the navy (I hope the rough compliment will be excused) are the proper spheres for those who are thus furnished with bodily activity, but at the same time deficient in that kind of parts which are necessary to make a valuable proficiency in polite literature. Dunces not being troubled with

any of those fine sensibilities which form the poet, the philosopher, and the orator, have, in the room of them, a bluntness and callosity which contribute much to animal courage. Though rejected from the schools of learning, they may shine in the boxing-schools, become heroes of the fist, and obtain, by muscular exertion, the patronage of the great and popular. They have usually a strong constitution, unimpaired by thought and sedentary employment, and may therefore bear the hardships of a marine life and a military campaign, better than the choicest spirits which nature has formed of finer clay*.

Dunces are also peculiarly sensible of the value of money. It is a 'good,' which they can feel and understand perfectly, while they are insensible to the subtle charms of intellectual beauty. They therefore seem to be intended by Providence for trade or manufactures. They may shine in the shop; though they disgraced the school; and in time may deride, as they count their stores, the poverty of science and philosophy. I never heard that a man failed of arriving at the dignity of a lord mayor through lack of clergy. Thousands would have worn regimentals, walked the quarter-deck, or stood behind the counter with eclat, who, as divines, physicians, and lawyers, lived uneasy, unhonoured, and unsuccessful.

Agriculture is a very proper employment for boys who show no abilities for the cultivation of science. It is a natural and reputable occupation; and I cannot but regret that many boys of dull parts, but of good estates, are not brought up to farming their own lands, instead of being thrust violently into schools, inns of court, and universities. Their health

* Meliore luto finxit præcordia.

and their fortunes would be improved in their patrimonial fields; but in the land of learning, they plow and sow with great labour and expense, and never reap the harvest*, either of profit, honour, or internal satisfaction.

* Littus sterili versamus aratro. Juv.

Evening LXXXIII.

On the peculiar Imprudence of the Poor in bringing up Dunces to Learning.

SECTION III.

The remarks which I have hitherto made on the subject of dunces, chiefly refer to persons in easy circumstances; but the propensity to bring up boys, of no abilities for learning, to learned professions, is no less frequent in the lowest orders of society.

The well-meaning parent, who has neither fortune nor interest to promote the advancement of his child, resolves to give him, what he calls, a good education. There is a free-school in the parish; and thither the boy is sent to learn Latin, without a moment's consideration on the abilities of the boy, or the chance of his being able to gain his bread independently of manual labour. From the age of four or five to that of fourteen, or perhaps nineteen, he is confined to his book, and flogged through Lilly's Grammar. His health is injured, his spirits dejected, his time lost; for, after all, the parent finds it necessary to employ him in his own trade, in digging and delving, in shoemaking, in the business of a drawer, in the workshop of the smith, the brazier, or the carpenter. The boy has lost some time which might have been usefully spent in learning his handicraft; and has besides acquired, by associating with boys of higher rank, some ideas which teach him to lament the hardship of his lot, to despise his present compa-

nions, and the vulgarity, toil, and filthiness of the manufactory: as to the little learning he has gained, it is soon forgotten, and indeed it was scarcely worth preserving, for I am proceeding on the hypothesis that the boy was a dunce. Perhaps he can repeat *Propria quæ maribus*, *Quæ genus*, and *As in præsenti*; but the attainment of these has cost him so many bitter pains, that he wishes to assist his natural tendency to forget them, by total neglect and voluntary oblivion.

I hope not to be misunderstood. I mean only to dissuade traders and labourers from sending their sons to learn Latin, or continuing them in the study of it, when their sons are evidently deficient in natural ability. God forbid that I, or any one, should wish to prevent a poor man, whose son is singularly endowed with the powers of understanding, from giving him every opportunity of improvement, and raising his condition! I know that some of the ablest and best men whom this nation has produced, were the offspring of indigent parents, and educated at free-schools. The founders of those excellent institutions intended them for such as could not be educated but by the aid of eleemosynary endowments. I only mean to discourage the bringing up of dunces to learned professions, whether they are the sons of the rich or the poor. The rich, indeed, can provide for a dunce by interest, or by patrimonial estates; but what can the poor man do for a son whom he has forced into orders, without learning, as well as without borough interest? Even with learning, he would find it extremely difficult to procure a better livelihood for him, than a porter, or a menial servant, can earn; for distinguished preferment is either sold, or bestowed by interest alone.

But without learning, without character, without friends, a young man may live, if he can live at all, to curse the mistaken ambition of his well-meaning parent.

Let a parent then, in the lower rank, be fully convinced by the most indubitable testimony, and not by fatherly fondness and vanity, that his child possesses extraordinary abilities, before he determines to make a scholar of him. He will otherwise neglect the parent's duty, which consists in consulting the real comfort and the credit of his child, without sacrificing solid and substantial good to the fantastic prospects of vanity.

It may be said, that if the poor do not introduce their children to the church, many churches must go unsupplied. I rather think there will always be persons enough in the middle ranks of life, to supply the churches, provided the stipends are such as they ought to be; and where they are not such, the churches should go unsupplied, till they are made such by those who are concerned to secure their supply. As to the supply of them by dunces, and persons totally unfit for the clerical profession, and unable, by poverty, to preserve even a decent appearance, I do not conceive that such a supply of them can be conducive to the interest of religion. A little distress for persons to supply the churches, might cause an event which has long been most devoutly wished for, an augmentation of the stipends of those who perform the parochial duty. Though the modes of decent life are more than doubly expensive, and provisions and necessaries greatly enhanced in price, yet the stipends of poor vicars and curates continue as they were in the last century. Dr. Bentley says, it was made appear to parliament, that six thousand

of the clergy have, at a middle rate, one with another, less than fifty pounds a year; and, I believe, the numerous body of curates was not included in this estimate *. Go now, ye poor parents, and run your lubberly lads' heads against pulpits.

* See Bishop Watson's Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Evening LXXXIV.

On the Necessity of Delay and Caution, before a Boy is given up as a Dunce.

SECTION IV.

Before I leave the subject, I think it necessary to add a caution against a too precipitate decision on the abilities of boys; a rash removal of them from a life of learning, and a too early condemnation of them as dunces incurable.

There are some natures, and those too of the sublimest kind, which will not submit to the trammels of common discipline, but will thrive with spontaneous vigour, and grow of themselves to a stupendous elevation. Thus the oak of the forest would scorn to be nailed against a wall like the feeble exotic fruit-tree, but will reach the skies when left unmolested in its native soil. Boys of this kind do not display much of their ability at schools and colleges, and often offend those who cannot comprehend their noble natures, by the appearance of a dulness, which, like the mist of the morning, is only the prelude of solar effulgence in a sky unclouded.

The history of literature affords many examples of those who made a disgraceful figure both at school and college, but who afterwards became greater men than their boasted school-fellows and cotemporary collegians. Scioppius, who wrote a philosophical grammar, would not submit, while at school, to learn the common rules, as he relates of himself; and Cowley either could not, or, as it is most probable, would not commit to memory those elemen-

tary instructions, in which all boys educated at grammar-schools are constantly initiated. There is in the minutiæ of grammar, as they are taught by some persons, something no less abstruse than logic and metaphysics; and therefore highly disgustful to boys whose distinguishing talent is imagination. Very bright boys, therefore, may exhibit, where a proper method of introducing them is deficient, a backwardness in learning grammar, which may cause them to be mistaken by careless observers for dunces.

Our most celebrated schools cannot boast of producing the first-rate poets of this country. Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, and Swift, were not indebted to them. They were educated rather irregularly. They were self-taught; and after all the boasts of classical discipline, the ablest men, diamonds of the first water, stars of the first magnitude, were AUTOMATHS, or instructed by their own persevering diligence. The truth is, that nature, together with the ability, gave them a most ardent inclination for excellence, which advanced them to wonderful heights, and broke through all obstacles. These considerations may answer the purpose for which they are introduced; that of preventing parents from despairing of their children's proficiency, after the failure of the first trials, or on observing the dulness of early infancy.

But after every trial, and the most patient expectation, some boys will appear, beyond the possibility of error, arrant dunces in all that concerns what is called book-learning. But even under this unfavourable circumstance, consolation may be derived from reflections of the following nature.

Dunces, it is generally believed, are not the least

ment, an incumbrance, a burden, and a pest. The fabric of a well-regulated community is like a fine piece of architecture, where every stone and beam is in its proper place, and where a single derangement would not only destroy the beauty and symmetry, but impair the strength of the pile.

Consolation must be sought under the circumstance of want of parts, as under every other misfortune; but, after all, genius is a blessing to be considered as an instance of the favour of Heaven, and an emanation from the Deity. It is devoutly to be wished for, diligently improved, and, when improved, to be devoted to the glory of the giver, or, in other words, to the advancement of human happiness. It is a mean idea which views it only as an instrument of personal aggrandisement, selfish pleasure, and sordid interest. It should, however, be restrained by prudence, and guided by benevolence; and then it will be a source of delight to the possessor, and of a thousand advantages to all who are within the sphere of its powerful influence.

It seems to be the will of Providence that, comparatively speaking, few should possess the glorious endowment in a super-eminent degree. All great excellence must indeed be rare, for it would cease to be great excellence if it were common. But let not those to whom genius is denied, lament. Genius has its evils, from which they are exempt. It is envied, it is exposed to a thousand pains and penalties from the injuries of those who, not knowing or not regarding the irritable niceties of its sensibility, rudely strike the tremulous fibre whenever they approach it. It is of too fine and subtle a nature for the tumults and agitations of a world madly rushing on in the vulgar pursuits of avarice and ambition.

Unguarded by discretion, of which it is often too proud to acknowledge the dominion, it often causes a life of misery, and a premature dissolution.

Let it also be remembered by those, who are conscious of inferiority to their fellow-creatures, that all distinctions, whether civil, natural, mental, or corporeal, all but superiority of virtue, will shortly cease; and that it is expressly declared on the highest authority, that TO WHOM MUCH HAS BEEN GIVEN, OF HIM MUCH WILL BE REQUIRED; a declaration, which, if duly impressed, might afford comfort to the dunce, and cause the genius to tremble.

Evening LXXXV.

On moral Phlebotomy, a Mode of Discipline among the Romans.

SIR,

It was a part of the ancient military discipline among the Romans, to order a delinquent to undergo phlebotomy; and this was originally intended, as Aulus Gellius seems to think, rather as a remedy than a punishment, *quasi minus sani viderentur omnes qui delinquerent*, with an idea, that all who misbehaved were therefore to be considered and treated as invalids or unsound.

I was seriously considering this method adopted by the wise Romans, and I could not help thinking that the remedy might be extended to delinquents in modern times, and in other professions and employments of life, as well as in the military.

Suppose the case of a knowing young man, who is not easy till he has picked a quarrel, or distinguished himself by a nocturnal riot in a college, in Covent Garden, in the lobbies of the Theatre, in the rural retreat of Vauxhall, or in a duel in Hyde Park. As his irregularity is usually attributed to the warmth of his blood, I should think the lancet might be used with the greatest probability of success. A few ounces quietly let out in the surgery, might prevent the effusion of great quantities by throwing bottles, by the stroke of the watchman's staff, or the sword of some hot-headed antagonist.

It is usual to call persons who are too eager in their pursuits, 'sanguine;' for such surely no cure can be so certain and well adapted as phlebotomy.

There is a passion which assumes the name of love, but, instead of promoting the happiness of its object, regards neither its peace nor good fame, while it licentiously seeks its own gratification. It has nothing in it of the tenderness, the delicacy, the purity of love, but is very violent, and seems, by the symptoms, to partake the nature of a fever. I believe, in this case, copious bleeding, with a cooling regimen, would not fail of effecting a temporary cure.

There are numerous tribes of schemers, projectors, and garreteer politicians, who pester themselves and the public with their crudities, but who might be brought to their sober senses, if the blood, which flows in too great quantities to the brain, were drawn off by a well-timed and powerful revulsion.

You authors, Sir, excuse my freedom, often stand in great need of phlebotomy. You have a thousand flights, fancies, and vagaries, which can be attributed to nothing but the irregular tide of your blood. You swell with pride and vanity, and think to reform the world from your garrets; but the world goes on as it pleases, and you have nothing but your labour for your pains. I think I could lower your pride and vanity by my lancet, and teach you an humility which perhaps you will never learn in the books of philosophy, and which would save you a great deal of needless trouble.

In a word, all poets, religious enthusiasts, balloonists, lottery adventurers, ambitious statesmen, and choleric orators in the British or Irish parliament, may, I am convinced, receive great benefit from the phlebotomizing system of morality. I intend soon to offer myself to the universities as a professor of moral phlebotomy. How convenient and expeditious a process will it be! No occasion for preaching, reading, and contemplating; for, whatever disorder

you labour under, only repair to the artist who shaves for one penny, and bleeds for two, and you may be restored to health. Adieu. I stop short, lest you should think I want bleeding myself.

Yours, &c.

AN ETHICO-CHIRURGICAL OPERATOR.

Though my correspondent has treated the subject ludicrously, yet I have little doubt but he meant to convey instruction, and I shall take occasion from his letter to recommend bodily temperance, as conducive to the government of the passions and imagination.

The irregularities of youth are oftener caused by excess, than by that natural ebullition of blood which is often alleged in their excuse. But allowing as much as can be required, to the impulse of the blood and spirits, yet it will still be true, that extravagances of behaviour will probably be much aggravated by intemperance in wine; for indeed, to add the heat of wine to the heat of youth, what is it but to throw oil upon the fire? Yet at no age do men indulge in wine so freely as when, according to their own confession, their blood is already too much inflamed by its natural fermentation. If, instead of adding to the flame, young men would manage it with discretion, and even damp it sometimes, it would probably continue to burn, with a temperate yet sufficient warmth, to extreme old age. But the ardour of youth, raised to a fever by wine, not only urges to acts of folly and madness, but burns the vital stamina which were intended by nature for long du-

ration. I by no means go so far as to recommend either phlebotomy or cathartics to a young man who is under the influence of a violent passion; but I may venture to suggest, that he would find the conquest over himself greatly facilitated by abstinence from wine, and by moderation in diet. His reason might have an opportunity of asserting that ascendancy, which she ought to claim, and will probably possess, when the delirium of intemperance is once abated.

The errors of the imagination are very much increased by intemperance. During the fever which it occasions, man is apt to dream, and to mistake his visions for realities. How many lives have been sacrificed to supposed affronts and injuries, to affronts never intended, and injuries never committed! But they appeared, in the hour of convivial excess, not only real, but of the greatest magnitude, and in the most ugly colours. If the offended parties would allow themselves time to cool, and spend the next day in abstinence, or at least in strict temperance, I think the phantom of imagination, which appeared like a giant, would dwindle to a dwarf, or dissolve into nothing, like a cloud in the azure expanse of heaven, which melts into air, and leaves an undisturbed serenity. Temperance would effect what argument attempted in vain; and such influence has the body over the mind, that there is often no method of reducing the peccant humours of the mind so effectual, as that of duly arranging the frail mansion in which it is destined to dwell. It is a most unhappy degradation, when the mind is governed by the body, over which it might, by the exertion of its native powers, exercise, for the most part, an absolute dominion.

To cure the mind through the medium of the body is by no means a new process in mental medicine.

The fasts, and the mortification of self-denial, which are recommended in the church, were certainly intended to promote sanctity of life, by purifying the body, which in revelation is so greatly honoured as to be called the Temple of the Holy Spirit. After all our efforts, the humiliating experience of frequent failure must convince every serious man, that he must submit himself to the supreme physician, the physician of souls, who, if he will, can make us clean; and that he will do so, if we ask, as we ought, with sincere faith and piety, there is every reason to hope and believe, from the consideration of that attribute in which he is known chiefly to delight.

EVENING LXXXVI.

On rhetorical Action.

THE ancient rhetoricians understood by ACTION, which they so strongly insisted on, not gesture only, but the whole business of 'pleading a cause,' that is, elocution and gesture united, as they appeared in the Court, the Senate, or the Forum, in the actual delivery of an oration.

Action in this comprehensive sense deserved the high esteem of Demosthenes, who, according to a well-known story of Cicero and Quintilian, being asked what was the first, second and third requisite of oratory, replied Action, action, action. And here action is synonymous with what we call 'delivery.'

But many among the modern speakers seem to think that action is nearly synonymous with 'activity,' and means, in its rhetorical use, the contortions of the arms, hands, legs, eyes, and various features of the face. They imagine that Demosthenes undertood by action, gesture only.

An idea thus erroneous, but supported by misunderstanding the prince of orators, has led many into a mode of delivery truly ridiculous. They were determined to display a sufficient quantity of this prime requisite, and have in consequence exhibited the action, or rather agility, of a Harlequin, when they intended to represent, in their own persons, Cicero and Demosthenes revived. They have made even the pulpit resemble the stage of the mountebank, where a jack-pudding entertains with his 'action' the gaping multitude.

It is recorded of a divine, who did not confine

his action to the pulpit, that he adorned the following passage in the Psalms with peculiar vivacity of gesture.

The singers go before, the minstrels follow after: in the midst are the damsels playing with the timbrels.

At the words the 'singers go before,' he reached out both his arms, at full length before him; 'the minstrels following after he represented with his finger pointing over his left shoulder; and when he came to 'in the midst are the damsels playing with the timbrels,' he illustrated the passage by playing on the Prayer Book with the fingers of both his hands, just as if he had been touching the keys of a harpsichord.

Gesture in oratory is intended to express the passions and emotions of the mind according to the impulse of nature, and not to display the speaker's abilities in the art of mimicry and pantomime. The imitation of the idea in the mind, by the attitude of the body, should not be very close; because such an imitation is a desertion of the orator's part for the actor's, and turns the attention of the hearer from the subject matter to the agility and mimetic talents of a stage performer. If the imitation is really good, the spectator is struck and pleased with it, but at the same time loses the proper effect of the speech; if, on the other hand, it is awkward, he laughs, and despises the wretched attempt at an unattained excellence.

Gesture is therefore to be ventured on with great caution, and conducted with nice judgement. It may destroy the effect of a fine composition, and render an orator, who may be in other qualifications respectable, an object of contempt and derision.

This consideration has induced me to express my surprise at the displeasure, which many have shown

on seeing boys at school, and young men at the university, go through their exercises of declaiming, without moving their hands and arms. I have heard the hearers observe on such occasions, that the young man recited with great judgement and propriety; what a pity it was, that he stood motionless as a statue!

This criticism arose from their habit of attending the theatres; where imitation being the professed business of the speakers, mimetic gesture is studied with laudable attention, and without danger of defeating the purpose of the player by too near a resemblance. It is his business to 'take off,' as it is well expressed, the external form and manner of those whom he represents, as accurately as the wax 'takes off' the sculptured figure of the seal, or the paper 'takes off' the engraving on the copper plate.

What Horace said of poetry may be said of gesture in oratory. Mediocrity in it is worse than the total want of it. If it is not excellent in its kind, it is better to omit it entirely. If it is stiff, formal, awkward, or excessive, it will lessen the effect of the finest oration, by mixing, with the approbation of the hearer, a sentiment of ridicule.

Evening LXXXVII.

On the Inconsistency of affected Sensibility.

There seems to be a fashion in virtue as well as in vice. There was a time when learning was the fashion among the ladies at court, and the hours which are now spent by them under the hair-dresser, were devoted to the perusal of Plato in the original language. Chastity was once the pride of all who aimed at the character of people of fashion; and courage, honour, generosity, gravity, and heroism, the ornaments ambitiously pursued by courtiers and fine gentlemen.

The quality chiefly affected of late is sensibility; and the affectation has been greatly increased, if not introduced, by the taste for novels. The sentimental comedies, and the affecting tragedies, in which love and the distresses it occasions when disappointed, are feelingly described, have also contributed greatly to diffuse it.

When it is genuine, and not increased to a degree of weakness and effeminacy, it is certainly amiable. True tenderness, or compassion, is one of the most honourable distinctions of human nature. He who cannot feel as a man, when an object presents itself naturally formed to affect the human heart, displays a disposition not only odious, but such as may lead him to actual and premeditated cruelty.

But while I honour the reality, I must despise the affectation. And there is reason to suspect that much of the sensibility, of which we hear and read, is affected, because it seems to operate partially and ostentatiously. It seems to display itself chiefly in

gallantry, and in such acts of bounty as are likely to be known, celebrated, and admired, in the realms of fashion. If any lady or lady-like gentleman can find, at a watering-place, a distress similar to any thing in some fashionable novel, it is surprising with what pathos it will be described, and with what assiduity relieved; but if a distress equally afflicting occurs in the obscure village where the mansion-house stands, no notice is taken of it, or no more than a regard to common decency requires. The reason seems to be a fear that the sensibility which alleviates the village distress, will never reach the ears of those who tread the paths of fashionable life.

And if a gross passion operating in a corrupted heart prompts to an unlawful amour, it is often obeyed by the parties with little shame, and with a great deal of complacency and self-congratulation, on their being possessed of such a sensibility as irresistibly tempts them to say,

Curse on all laws save those which love has made!

Bad passions, and bad actions, the consequence of them, have always been common, and will continue to be so in the present condition of human nature; but to boast of them as doing honour to the heart, under the name of 'lovely and delicate sensibility,' is peculiar to the fashionable of the present age. Mr. Sterne and Mrs. Draper have too many imitators. A goat is a personage of as great sensibility and sentiment as most of them.

If thepretenders to extraordinary sensibility really possess it in a degree which renders its fine impulses utterly irresistible, why does it not appear uniformly, and in other affairs as well as those of love? The Christian religion recommends charity and universal benevolence; but the persons who aim at the

epithet 'fashionable,' as the most enviable distinction of humanity, are by no means equally zealous to obtain the character of good Christians. Many of them, I believe, affect the character of possessing too much sense to be seduced by any thing which they call a popular mode of superstition. When they are at their seats in country villages, and far from the tribe whose admiration they seek, do these persons of 'exquisite sensibility' employ their time in seeking objects of compassion, in the cottages of poverty and misery; and their money, in the diffusion of comfort? Alas! they too often take the opportunity of practising a most rigid œconomy at home, to the exclusion of all bounty, that they may have abundance in the next Bath season. Charitable subscriptions are indeed very common at Bath, Brighthelmstone, and Tunbridge, and many are delighted in setting down their names, not forgetting their titles; but is there not in the mean time many a poor family pining in want, near their houses and estates at home, who never receive any thing from them, because there is no subscription-book, no master of the ceremonies, and none of the fashionable fraternity to observe them?

Does the sensibility, to which they pretend in love, display itself towards their husbands, wives, children, and in 'all the tender charities of private life?' I rather doubt it, because I observe that Lady ———, so celebrated for sensibility, is separated from her husband, and never sees her children; because Sir ——— never gives a farthing of the fortune he acquired in the East Indies to his poor relations; because my Lord ——— is never at home, where he has a most amiable wife, who pines in solitude, and in vain laments his absence. Is it necessary, to the excitement or gratification of this boasted sensibility, that the object should be unlawful or clandestine?

If so, and experience seems to prove it so, it can have no pretensions to praise; for it is inconsistent with honour and generosity.

True sensibility, equally remote from weakness and affectation, will feel the sentiments of devotion with no less vivacity than those of love. It will, I believe, be oftener warmed with an attachment to virtue than to vice. It will be delicate and reserved, rather than forward, noisy, and ostentatious. But has the sensibility which is assumed at public places, or by the slaves of fashion, any of these characteristics? Is it not, on the contrary, rather inclined to libertinism in religious principle, very far from scrupulous in moral conduct, bold, busy, and conceited? It has indeed every appearance of vanity; and, if there were no danger of confounding it with real sensibility, the honour of our nature, it ought to be universally exploded with ridicule.

That sensibility alone which produces piety to God and benevolence to man, has the indisputable mark of genuine excellence. Vice and vanity will produce the other sort, which has every sign of a counterfeit, and, like the base coin which in the hands of the interested is taught to emulate gold, ought, if possible, to be cried down by public authority. It too often passes current in the world, not without great injury to society: for honour paid to false virtue robs the true of its just right, and contributes, by lessening the rewards of truth, to discourage its appearance.

Evening LXXXVIII.

On an extravagant Attachment to Letters.

The love of letters appears to have operated with a force equal to the most violent passions. Some tempers are indeed so constituted, that whatever attaches them, grasps them tenaciously, and holds them firmly, like the roots of the oak fixed in the stubborn clay. Books, horses, dogs, statues, pictures, music, all that is beautiful in art, or in lifeless nature, are found to warm the bosoms of their 'amateurs' with a love equalling, and in some instances exceeding, the love of women.

It is related of those deep scholars, Budæus and Turnebus, that they spent their wedding day in a severe prosecution of their usual studies, which were remarkably dry. Their poor ladies, I am afraid, had but little reason to expect much happiness from lovers who could prefer the dreary researches of grammatical and critical learning, to the high and innocent delights of nuptial festivity. The bosom which, at such seasons, could have room for any other sentiment than love and joy, must have been too cold for the social duties, and fit only for the damp walls of a monastic cell.

And what did these scholars produce by an attachment to the severer muses in preference to their wives? Dull tomes of uninteresting erudition, where the worm riots uncontrolled, and the dust accumulates undisturbed by the hand of industry. Such examples are happily not common; and if they were, what would become of philanthropy?

It is said of St. Jerom, that he 'filed' away his teeth to the very gums, that he might pronounce Hebrew with greater facility.

Joachimus Fortius Ringelbergius advises the student to take great care lest he should lose much time in sleep. He advises him to have an alarum clock by his bedside; but if that is not to be conveniently procured, to lay stones, and bits of wood, on his bed, and under his side, which, though he will not feel them much at first, may, after an hour or two, gall him to the quick, and cause him to get up of his own accord. What an enthusiasm of application! Not content with spending the day in labour, he wished the student to lose the sweets of repose, and almost literally to plant thorns upon his pillow. No pursuit but that of virtue, can require such austerity; and even virtue, in her most rigid exaction of discipline, listens to reason, and leans to moderation. When she deserts them, she becomes fanaticism; and hurries her mistaken votaries to madness and to misery.

I never could admire the celebrated but severe discipline of Monsieur Pascal. "He wore," we are told, "an iron girdle, full of sharp points, next to his skin, and when any idle thought came into his head, or when he took any pleasure in the place he was in, he would give himself blows with his elbow, to make the prickings of the girdle more violently painful, and oblige himself, by these means, to call his duty to remembrance. This practice appeared to him of such use, that he retained it till his death, even to those last days of his life, when perpetual pains afflicted him sufficiently, without the co-operation of the pungent girdle.

Whoever labours under the mania of excessive study will, I think, find an effectual cure in reading Tissot on the Diseases incident to literary Persons.

Tissot however appears to me to have exaggerated his descriptions, so as to render them truly terrifying, and sufficient to deter most men from the common and moderate employments of literary life. I mention it only as my opinion, that he has 'exaggerated' his descriptions; and I think so, because I have known many persons devoted to letters, who enjoyed remarkably good health, and were instances of singular longevity. They probably had sense enough to take precautions against the effects of great application; and to relieve their labours by air and exercise. But Tissot's book may be yet very useful, as it cannot but deter the rational student from excessive application: the evils of which he enumerates so copiously, and paints so formidably, that a man who duly regards his happiness might fall into a *bibliophobia* from reading it, and fly from a library with as much horror as a mad dog from a pond.

A moderate application is sufficient for the attainment of all necessary and useful knowledge, and the excessive attachment which some men display is chiefly in 'trifling' pursuits. Not satisfied with the great and essential objects, which answer every purpose of real utility, they pursue their inquiries into matters of mere curiosity, with no other intention, however they may plausibly disguise it, than their own amusement. But time, health, and life, are too precious to be sacrificed to the pleasure of gratifying mere curiosity.

No man comes into the world without many obligations of the moral and social kind. No man can, consistently with his duty, suffer himself to be ingrossed by contemplation. Some sort of social activity is necessary in the most retired scenes, and in professions and modes of life the most distant from commercial and political employment.

Few stand so insulated as not to be nearly connected with others by friendship or kindred; besides the general connexion with all men, which arises from a participation of the same nature. But how can he, who is immured in his closet, or abstracted by perpetual absence from the busy scene before him, attend to the claims which others may justly make on his active beneficence? He will feel as little inclination as ability to serve them. Every call upon his exertions, in their favour, will be considered as an importunate interruption, to be checked by a morose reprimand, rather than listened to with humane condescension. He may, indeed, labour in the recesses of his study; but as his labour terminates in his private gratification, as it produces no external fruits, as it prevents him from taking an active part in society, it is a labour which entitles him to no esteem. He is, in truth, to be numbered among the most selfish of mankind, as he sacrifices all his social duties to the pursuit of his own solitary pleasure.

Providence has taken care that such conduct should bring upon itself its own punishment. For this gloomy, recluse, selfish mode of living never fails to produce dejection of spirits, and the loss of that health and vigour which are necessary to sweeten all enjoyments. Languid, enervated, and feeble, the student who follows his pursuit with unreasonable and excessive ardour, exhibits, when he comes from the shade of his retirement into the sunshine of active life, a phantom, pallid as a ghost, and silent as a statue, and excites, in some, horror, and in others, ridicule.

That golden mean, therefore, so celebrated, in the active world, must be observed, with no less reverence, in the contemplative. For man, being a

compound of mind and body, departs no less from nature and wisdom, when he devotes himself wholly to the mind, than when he attaches himself exclusively to the body. Till we shall have 'shuffled off this mortal coil,' we must pay a great attention to our animal nature, in order to preserve the energy of the intellectual in its due vigour.

There is a passage at the close of Plutarch's Rules for the Preservation of Health, which I beg leave to recommend to the attention of the reader in the following free translation :

"Men of letters,' says he, "must beware of that anxious covetousness, and niggardly attention to matters of study and literature, which lead them to neglect the condition of their bodies, which some of them spare not, even when ready to sink under fatigue; compelling the mortal part to vie in exertion with the immortal, the earthly body with the spirit which is heavenly.

"The ox said to the camel, who refused to ease him a little of his burden, as they were travelling together, Thou wilt not help me now to bear something of my load; but very soon shalt thou be forced to carry all that I carry, and me besides; and so it happened, when the ox shortly after died under the pressure of his burthen.

"Just so it happens to that mind, which will not allow the body, its fellow labourer, rest and repose; for presently comes a fever, a headach, a dizziness of brain, with a dimness of sight, and then she is obliged to give up her books, her discourses, her disputations, and to sympathize with her companion in all the languor of disease.

"Wisely, therefore, did Plato advise us not to exercise the body without the soul, nor the soul without the body; but to let them draw together equally,

like horses harnessed together in a carriage, paying perpetual attention to the body's welfare, when its vigour is necessary to support the exertions of the mind, and thus producing that fine and lovely state of health, which prevents the body from becoming an impediment to the mind, or the mind to the body, either in action or contemplation."

Evening LXXXIX.

On superficial fine Gentlemen in the Military and other Departments.

There is a passage in Menander, frequently noticed by the moderns, which affirms that the gods themselves cannot make a polite soldier. It has been justly observed, by those who have quoted the passage, that the ideas of the ancients must have differed from those of the moderns on the subject of politeness, or of the military order; for no profession is supposed to be so polite, in modern times, as the military.

But perhaps, in the present question, the true idea of politeness is not ascertained. If it means the graces of external behaviour only, the soldier of modern times has often a just claim to it; but if it means the polish of a cultivated mind, he will often be found greatly deficient. For though it be true, that the various company which he may see in the course of his campaigns, or in winter-quarters, may give him a knowledge of the living world, of the prevailing manners, and the fashionable modes of address, yet it cannot give him a knowledge of the history and nature of man, nor such a comprehensive, liberal, and solid turn of thinking as can supply the want of education. As he must live much among strangers, he will find it necessary to make himself agreeable in his manners: for otherwise, he would often want those comforts of hospitality, which, in his wandering condition of life, are particularly desirable. But if he had laid in a store of ideas by education, and subsequent reflection, his company would be more sought, and he

would find a satisfaction, from a due degree of rational self-esteem, to which, with a mind totally destitute of literary elegance and philosophy, he must be a stranger.

But though, in consequence of long habit, strong parts, and much observation, he may acquit himself with wonderful success in the ordinary converse of the day, and be esteemed a man of sense in the conduct of business, yet he will discover his defect, his want of education, whenever he is obliged to have recourse to his pen to communicate his knowledge. He will then no longer be able to conceal inelegance and inaccuracy by external grace, nor to compensate the defect of clearness, precision, or argument, by vehemence of action or vociferation. He will often spoil good sense by bad expression, and cause contempt, by blunders occasioned through ignorance of orthography. Nor let it be urged that, in his profession, he will have no occasion to write; for every gentleman must, in the ordinary affairs of human life, write letters; and professional men are often obliged to write more formally and exactly on professional and scientific subjects.

It may not indeed be desirable, that soldiers in general should value themselves on learning, or make it their chief ambition to excell in letters. The arts of peace, and the duties of a state of war, are so different in their nature, and require dispositions to different, that it is not easy to excell in the one, without a neglect of the other; though Julius Cæsar, Raleigh, and many others, afford instances to prove that an excellence in both at the same time is possible as well as honourable. But in general it is to be feared, that literary ambition and employments, carried to any great length, might have a tendency to enervate the soldier, to give him a

distaste for the hardships which he can scarcely avoid in his profession, and to render a hero by profession effeminate. Letters are only to be pursued collaterally with the grand professional object. They must not rival it, and much less supplant it.

A competent knowledge of letters in the soldier is all that I maintain to be necessary; such a knowledge as enables him to speak and write like a man of liberal education; such a knowledge as enables him to seek and find amusement, in his leisure hours, in polite literature and improvement in moral philosophy, in the knowledge of himself, and of the various duties arising from the different relations and connexions of social and civil life.

It is to the want of knowledge and taste that much of the improper behaviour of military upstarts is to be attributed. Feeling themselves deficient, and unable to support a conversation on rational subjects, or to acquit themselves with credit in serious and important business, and at the same time very unwilling, from the pride of their profession, to acknowledge inferiority, they find nothing remaining but arrogantly to claim by noise, swaggering, blustering, and bullying, that attention which they have no other method to secure. They cannot, perhaps, converse rationally, or behave decently; but if you dare to show them that you think so, by the expression of a natural contempt, they can pull your nose, break your head with a candlestick, or run you through with that unhonoured sword, which never knew an enemy but at a tavern or coffee-house. The less a man excells in intellectual, the more he is inclined to exercise his brute force; but can that part of the profession make peculiar pretensions to politeness, which is ready to give up its claim to rationality, without which there can be no

real polish, though there may be a glossy varnish, which, in the eyes of the inexperienced, passes for a genuine lustre?

But though the military profession furnishes many instances of illiterate fine gentlemen, of those who call upon mankind to admire and applaud them for accomplishments and graces merely personal, yet it by no means monopolizes the species. And indeed, in justice to the profession, I must acknowledge, that the reason why so many illiterate persons are found in it, is not that the profession, which, from much leisure in modern times, furnishes peculiar opportunities for improvement, makes them so; but that it finds them so; for who are often selected for the army? They who are blockheads in their books, careless, idle, extravagant, and for that reason said to be fit for nothing else. Add to this, that young men often obtain commissions so early in life, as to be weaned from their books too soon, to have a turn of mind given them utterly incompatible with study; and that even those of the best abilities and dispositions are often sent to the regiment, before they could possibly have made an advancement in learning sufficient to continue its effects on the subsequent periods of life.

But illiterate fine gentlemen, I repeat, are by no means confined to the army. There are some to be found in almost every department; though they are not so frequent in this country as they were before the Spectators appeared. At the close of the last century, and the commencement of the present, your very fine gentlemen considered learning as a disgrace, and with fine estates, fine clothes, fine titles, they were content with minds as unfurnished as those of their valets, or their chambermaids. They could scarcely write a card or letter on the most

common affairs, not even an invitation to a dinner. It was a work and a labour; and when finished, it was hardly legible, from the badness of the hand-writing, and the incorrectness of the spelling; and by a strange perverseness, a letter of this kind was supposed to bear the marks of peculiar gentility. Beaus of those days, for of them I speak, were indeed blockheads; but, as if they were not really ignorant enough, they took pains to display their freedom from what was then contemptuously called clergy, book learning, and pedantry.

The very name of pedantry was artfully contrived by an association of confederated dunces, to convey ideas of terror; and indeed, the scholars in the universities had given too much reason for confounding learning with pedantry, by their scholastic jargon, and their attention to a philosophy which was of no use in society, and which, while it prevented men from acquiring the agreeable and graceful accomplishments, supplied them with nothing of solid utility to compensate awkwardness and pride.

But the case is now totally different. Men of rank and fortune bring up their children with care, and bestow upon them every improvement which their capacity will receive, and there is often found in the genteelest and most elevated circles of society the union of the fine gentleman with the polite and well-accomplished scholar. So that the illiterate fine gentleman will not now be kept in countenance, even in the regions of high life, where he once thought himself secure from contempt, and really was so, from the irrational and undistinguishing scorn of pedantry.

If a man be illiterate from misfortune, he is an object of pity, but not of contempt, while he does not give himself airs of superiority, and look round

for admiration. But in the present age, the fop without education, knowledge, taste, and a power of conversing with sense and spirit, must find a society of fops equally or more ignorant than himself, if he would avoid derision, or if he hopes to gratify his vanity. He commonly endeavours to supply all defects by loud talking and overbearing arrogance.

Evening XC.

On the Unmanliness of shedding Tears.

To shed tears is considered in modern times as unmanly; though the greatest men recorded in antiquity are represented by the poets and historians, as commonly giving vent to their sorrow by the fountains of the eyes.

The epithet δακρυχεων, which describes heroes shedding tears, is very frequent in Homer. Ulysses is represented by him as excelling all others in understanding; yet Ulysses sheds tears most copiously. In describing his sorrow in Calypso's island, Homer mentions his tears three times in the course of seven or eight lines:

Ουδε ποτ' ουσε
Δακρυοφιν τερσοντο . . .
Δακρυσι και στοναχησι και αλγεσι θυμον ερεχθων.
Πουτον επ' ατρυγετον δερκεσκετο—δακρυα λειβων.

His eyes from tears
Were never free . . .
With tears, and sighs, and grief, he pined away.
As o'er the sea he wishful look'd—he wept.

It may, then, fairly be concluded, that this great judge of human nature did not consider tears as disgraceful to the understanding: and that he did not imagine them derogatory from the character of courage, may be collected from his causing his greatest hero, Achilles, to shed tears in profuse abundance. When Achilles relates the ill usage he had received from Agamemnon, Homer concludes the recital with

Ὡς φατο δακρυχεων——
Και ῥα παροιθ' αυτοιο καθιζετο δακρυχεοντος
——— "Τεκνον, τι κλαιεις;" ———

Thus spoke the weeping hero.
Before him, as he wept, his mother stood.
——— "Why weeps my son?"

Many other instances might be brought from Homer, from Virgil, and the best poets and historians of antiquity, to prove that they thought the shedding of tears no diminution of their hero's character, either with respect to the understanding or the heart. If I may be allowed to take an instance from the Gospel, as well as from Pagan authors, let it be remembered that "JESUS WEPT."

It was an observation of ancient wisdom, that "Good men are very apt to shed tears." And

Αγαθοι αριδακρυες ανδρες—

this epithet was not understood by them in the sense in which the French accept it when they make 'good' synonymous with 'weak' and 'foolish.' There is, indeed, so much misery in the world, that he who does not feel it, and express his feelings as nature intended that he should, must be deficient in some of those organs which are necessary to constitute natural excellence. The strings which should vibrate, are relaxed; the heart that should be penetrated, is petrified.

Vice, luxury, excess, gaming, and a long converse with corrupt company, are found capable of contravening nature, and drying up the lachrymal glands as the sunbeams scorch the fibres which should give nutriment, verdure, and growth, to the herbage of the meadow. But let not those, in whom this un-

natural alteration has taken place, plume themselves on superior sense, courage, fortitude, or philosophy. Their insensibility is defect, not perfection.

Let us take an example of man's natural sympathy in an actual state of nature. The voyages to the southern hemisphere afford many such examples. There you will observe men, who are ready to face their enemy in the most dangerous battle, weeping with peculiar bitterness of sorrow at every domestic calamity. Look at home for a contrast, and behold a gamester of St. James's, long hackneyed in the pleasurable world, beholding the greatest misfortunes which can befall himself, his family, or the stranger within his gates, with a perfect *sang froid*; with eyes which scorn to shed a tear in the most trying circumstances of affliction.

Hardness of heart and insensibility of temper conceal themselves under the appellation of manly fortitude. To shed tears on sorrowful occasions, is no mark of a weak understanding; but of that tenderness and susceptibility, which, as it is the noblest distinction of human nature, is emphatically styled HUMANITY. There is nothing admirable, but rather pitiable, in a heart which has undergone, by time and collision with the world, a kind of premature ossification; nor let the most elevated among the sharers of human nature, and of all the evils it is heir to, blush at being seen to give vent to grief by the floodgates of the eyes. The lachrymal glands were intended by Providence for use, as much as any other part of the wonderful mechanism of the human frame.

It must be allowed, that tears have been brought into disrepute by their abuse. Very weak* and

* Vos quibus est virtus, muliebrem tollite luctum. Hor. Ep.

very artful * people have rendered them, in many instances, contemptible and suspicious. There are those who weep, from habit or affectation, on any and on no occasion; who seem to think a pearly drop as great an ornament to the cheek as the diamond suspended on the ear; who, when they cannot prevail by argument, have recourse to tears to excite compassion; who wantonly tamper with the finest feelings of the heart, and render sorrow itself ridiculous. Such persons should be watched with circumspection; for some symptom will appear to an accurate observer, which will betray their imposture. The usual error of such persons is, to pass the limits of the occasion; to weep to excess, to over-act their part, to seek spectators and witnesses of their affected sorrow, instead of retiring, as nature teaches, to silence and to solitude.

But let not the real mourner refuse to give expression to his feelings, by the mode which nature powerfully recommends, through a fear of being suspected either of imbecillity or artifice. Tears relieve the misery which causes them to flow. When philosophy, and even religion, have failed to assuage sorrow, a flood of tears has afforded consolation. The shower has fallen copiously, the clouds have immediately been dispelled, and the sky has resumed all its beautiful serenity.

* Vidi etiam lachrymas, an est pars fraudis in illis,
Hæ quoque habent artes, quoque jubentur, eunt.
Ovid. ad Demophoont.

Evening XCI.

On the Contempt expressed by profound Authors for Popularity.

It has frequently been pretended by some writers that they do not wonder at their own want of popularity, for they never addressed the people, but were contented with the approbation of the wiser few. They judged the vulgar unworthy their attention; and they could not stoop from their own imaginary eminences, to hold converse with those who are hidden in the shades of obscurity.

Writers, it is true, in profound philosophy and abstruse science can only address readers of learning; and learned readers are of necessity few, compared with the unlearned and the superficial. But works on morality and religion, subjects which equally concern every mortal, ought to be addressed and accommodated to the taste and understanding of all who possess common sense; and the more popular they are, the more meritorious because the more useful.

For what is the end proposed by the authors of such writings? To instruct philosophers? but philosophers are able to find instruction in a thousand books already before the public, the very sources from which the modern writer has derived his stream. If pretenders are not able to instruct themselves sufficiently well, yet they usually think themselves able, and the avenues to their bosoms are too often closed by self-conceit. True philosophers are confessedly few; but is it the part of a generous man to wish to confine the benefit he bestows to a few, a great

numbers are eager to partake of it who are in immediate want of it? Are the writers, whose works are only addressed, and indeed only intelligible, to a few, so valuable and useful, as those who have the desire and skill to bring down wisdom from the cloud-topt mountain to reside on the plains below, where myriads are wandering without a guide in the labyrinths of dangerous error? And yet no writers assume an air of greater superiority than those who affirm that they write not to the people, but to the purged ear of a few speculatists, who dream away life, weaving, like the solitary spider, flimsy cobwebs, which a breath can dissipate.

The writings of such men can only conduce to innocent and refined amusement; and they ought to be content with the praise of ingenuity. To extensive utility they can make no just claim; for the utility consists only or chiefly in affording entertainment to a few. Let them possess the praise which is their due, and let them be honoured for the innocence and the subtlety of their occupations: but let them not assume a superiority over writers who successfully instruct the people at large; that sort of people whom they affect to despise, but who constitute the majority of mankind, who have hearts and understandings capable of happiness and improvement, and who were intended by Providence to be the receivers of benefits from all who are in any respect able to bestow them, either by superior talents or greater opulence.

Our Saviour, who knew the duties of a teacher far better than the proudest of the sophists or philosophers, professedly and particularly preached his Gospel to the poor; that is, to the many, the vulgar, the ignorant, the miserable, those whom worldly grandeur, worldly wisdom, and unsanctified science,

were, at all times, apt to neglect and despise. The truth is, the approbation of the poor was not calculated to flatter pride, and therefore it was not desired; but he who sought to do good rather than to be applauded, addressed his instruction more immediately to those who had no other means of receiving it. He addressed it in a popular way, not in metaphysical and scientific terms; but in pleasing parables, and in familiar conversation.

And happy are those who are able to communicate good to the minds of men, in humble imitation of his popular and engaging manner; who use the talents which they have received, not in seeking or supplying speculative amusement, not in gratifying their own and their fellow-students' pride; but in clothing wisdom in a dress formed to attract the notice, and captivate the affection, of the erring multitude.

When I enter a large library, and view the bulky tomes of dull learning and abstruse science, the labours of many painful lives, now standing like useless lumber on dusty shelves, or affording a transient amusement to a few curious scholars, I cannot help lamenting that so much industry should have been exerted with so little advantage to human life. Many of them indeed were once popular, and did good in their generation; but more were never intended to be popular, and never did any good but in affording work to the ingenious artisan who printed them, or encouraging manufactures by the consumption of paper. Their authors and themselves sleep in peace; but they afford a lesson to the modern metaphysical and recondite writers, not to over-value their works on account of their utility; but to pay some respect to moral writings, which, though despised by them as trifling, have yet been universally read, and have diffused virtues and principles, the happy effects of

which have been doubtless great, and not easy to be defined or ascertained. One hint of practical wisdom has often preserved a whole life from folly and misery; and thousands and tens of thousands have been benefited as well as delighted by Addison, to every one who has read Malbranche and Locke.

To whatever superiority of understanding the metaphysical sophists may pretend, and whatever contempt they may affect for works which are universally well received by the common people, it is certain that it is not the talent of an ordinary genius to render his works acceptable to the majority of his fellow-creatures. He must have something in his spirit congenial with the better sentiments of human nature; he must have an easy and agreeable mode of conveying his sentiments, a talent by no means contemptible, a talent which those who despise would probably rejoice to possess.

I must distinguish, while I am treating this subject, between temporary and permanent popularity. Temporary popularity is often gained by contemptible arts, and is itself for the most part contemptible. The practice of puffing, as it is called by a ludicrous and cant appellation, often raises a bubble into the air, which bursts, and is annihilated even while the people gaze: but permanent popularity can arise only from a general experience of utility and excellence and notwithstanding the reasonings of criticism *à priori*, and the arbitrary decisions of reputed judges, the merit of all literary works must be appreciated by their real utility, and their real utility by the extent and duration of their beneficial effect.

Heraclitus is said to have heartily boasted, that one good judge was to him as a multitude, and that the numberless crowds were as nobody:

Εἷς ἐμοι ἀνθρωπος τρισμυριοι, οἱ δ' ἀνεριθμοι
Οὐδεις.—

This might be said merely in contempt of some ἀμουσοι, tasteless critics, who had censured him without understanding him; but if he meant to prefer the judgement of any individual to the united opinion of mankind at large, I must dissent from him entirely. All men have hearts and understandings in some degree of excellence; the general decisions of whole nations must be final; and I do not believe there is so much difference between one man and another in the powers of feeling and judging, as the proud imagine, and assert, when they mean to pay themselves the compliment of claiming a place among the *wiser* few, the select spirits, who from their fancied elevation look down on the multitude wandering in the vale below, just as they behold the reptiles of an ant-hill.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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